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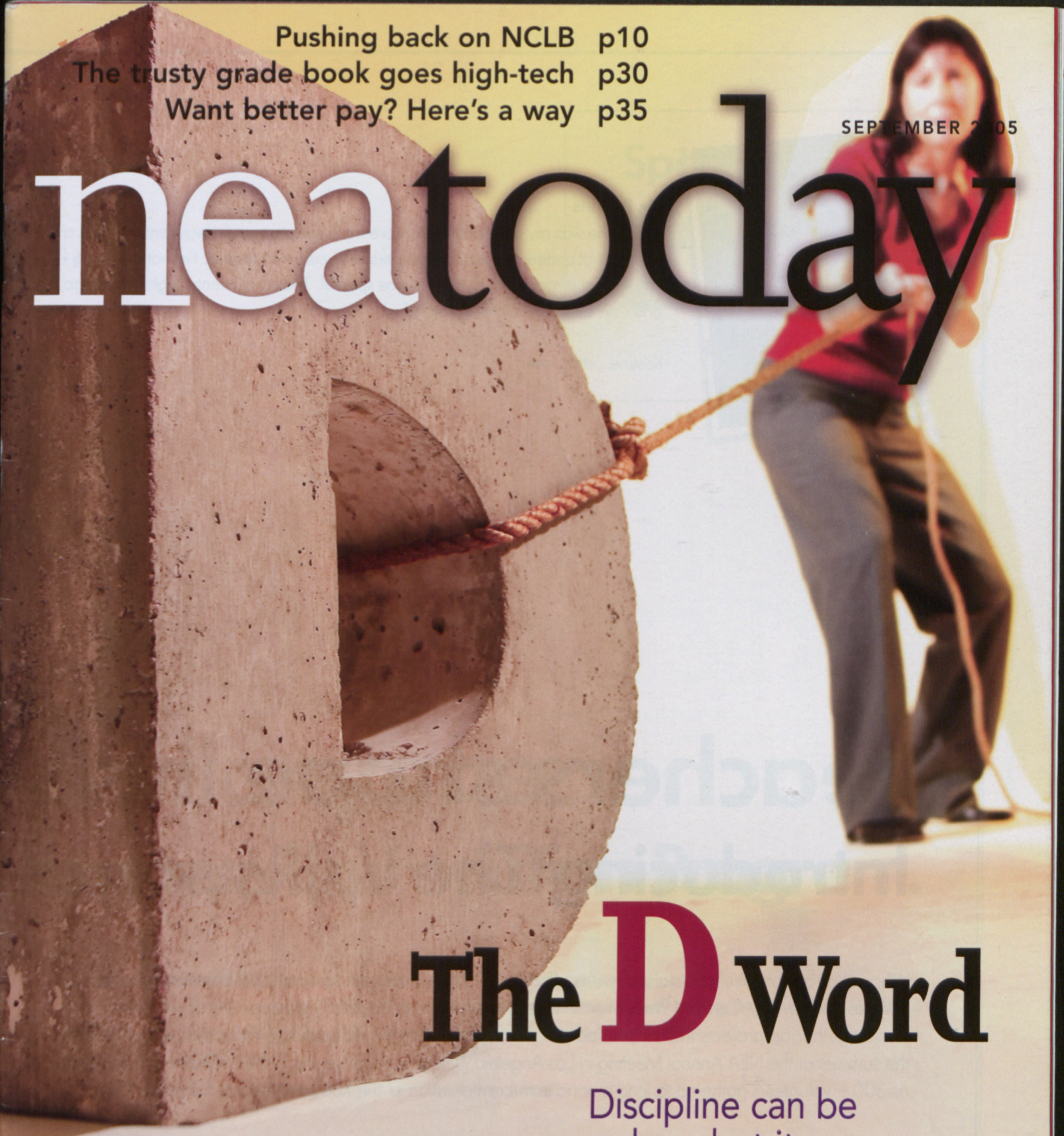
SEPTEMBER 2005

neatoday



The D Word

Discipline can be a drag, but it doesn't have to drag you down.

START FRESH WITH OUR 25 TIPS. SEE PAGE 22.

nea
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nea.org
Great Public Schools for Every Child

Mr. Perkins

"In 1976 he was my art teacher. He wore wool sweaters and always smelled like a fresh pot of coffee. He was the first person to call me 'creative.' I'm not even sure I knew what it meant, but I knew it was special. That was twenty-eight years ago, and I still blush when I tell the story."

Kristine, Jetta Driver

Teachers shape lives.

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What's it all about? Well, for starters, we're offering all NEA members a **special 2.9% interest rate*** on the purchase of any VW Certified Pre-Owned Vehicle. In addition to this offer, we're teaming up with the NEA to work together on projects that help to advance the cause of public education. We kicked off our alliance this summer at the NEA Annual Meeting in Los Angeles. We were onsite helping out with **Outreach to Teach,** as 300+ volunteers gathered to lend a hand in the revitalization of the Roosevelt Middle School in Compton.

Volkswagen Teacher Appreciation

*This special APR rate is available on 2000–2005 CPO vehicles. 60-month financing available to approved credit. Example: for every $1,000 financed for 60 months, $17.92 is due.

Special NEA

2.9%

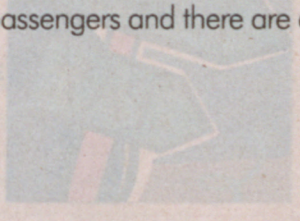
APR*

Ask anyone.

Teacher Appreciation Program.

It's amazing what a difference a little cleanup, a fresh coat of paint, and miles of sod can make. The transformation was incredible. The Volkswagen Teacher Appreciation Program is our way of saying thanks to the Mr. Perkins (and Mrs. Mitchells and Ms. Kapowskis and Mr. Bornsteins) everywhere.

On the road of life there are passengers and there are drivers.



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The D Word

Take control of your classroom from the first day of school with discipline tips from your colleagues who have figured out successful strategies to silence the Interruptor, stop the Bully, calm the Angry Child, and convince all the rest to stay on task and learn.

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IMAGE TOP: PHOTO: COMSTOCK IMAGES; PHOTO COLLAGE: GROFF CREATIVE, INC.; SMALL PHOTOS/ART CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: STEPHANIE BRUCE, DANNY PECK, DEBRA DIXON

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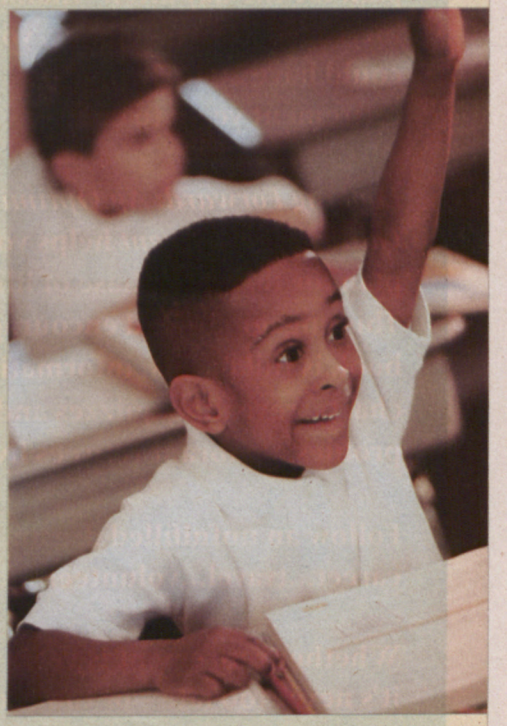
Keeping the Peace

I can't remember the first time I held out my hand to let a teacher whack it with a ruler, but I am certain it was not the last. Down South, back in the day, it was the rare student who escaped this ritual of "research-based" discipline. The rules were simple: pick a fight, say a nasty word, talk unkindly about somebody's clothes (or heaven forbid, their mom)—and, as the old folk liked to say, your goose was cooked. ¶ Despite the fear that loomed, it was never clear to me that the ruler really worked for my classmates and me; we were repeat offenders, all. Yet somehow—and this owed as much to the civility of the times as anything—school life did tool along in relative peace. ¶ The world, of course, is a different place now. As our cover story notes, educators grapple with a whole lot more than flying spitballs and schoolyard spats. Discipline problems often confound to the point of sapping the spirit. How do you show you're in charge (and care, too, thank you) without being mocked or ignored? What do you do with all that attitude, all those bare midriffs, all that ugly hallway banter? ¶ The good cheer here is that there are answers—really, many—and they don't entail lining up the class with a ruler in hand. They're common sense, innovative tricks of the trade that come by way of your colleagues who've lived and learned. We serve them up to you in this issue with hopes that as the school year kicks off, you'll step into the classroom feeling empowered and hopeful—and that you stay that way until the last bell rings. ¶ Call it our welcome back gift. Ponder, use, discard what you don't need—and then write, call, e-mail, or log in at www.nea.org and tell us what's working and what's not. We love hearing from you because it's what makes this vast community of educators, well, a community. So be in touch. But above all, have a great year. We can't wait to share it with you.



Marilyn Milloy

EDITOR MARILYN MILLOY

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Most of us dream about the day we can retire, but few actually plan for the day after. Thanks to increased life expectancy, you could have 20 to 30 post-retirement years to enjoy.

Looking Forward
An Optimist's Guide to Retirement
Start a second career • Go back to school • Discover ways to volunteer • Expand your social network • Find your spiritual path • Reconnect with your passions, from travel and theater to gardening and athletics
Ellen Freudenheim

Looking Forward: An Optimist's Guide to Retirement helps you plan for this new phase of life. This engaging—and encouraging—book is full of tips, informative charts, revealing quizzes and profiles of vibrant retirees living life to its fullest.

Follow an unfulfilled dream...start a second career...travel...volunteer...

Whether retirement is years away or right around the corner, it's never too late—or too soon—to plan for your "post-career" days. Then you'll be "looking forward" too!

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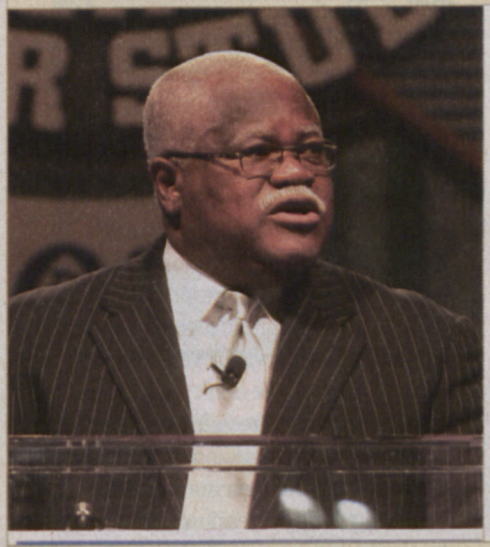
Great Public Schools for Every Child

Calling on America

During the three years that I have been honored to serve as your President, not one day has passed without leaving me with a reason to be proud of NEA members' skill and determination.

As the nation's largest deliberative body, our Representative Assembly (RA) is truly a sight to behold! My pride swells every Fourth of July when I witness the commitment and dedication of delegates to the RA.

This year, united by the theme "Team NEA—Fighting for You, Your Schools, Your Students!" more than 8,000 delegates gathered in Los Angeles. They represented the 2.7 million NEA members across the country who are keepers of the dream that represents the *public* in public education. Together, they worked to strengthen NEA, public schools, and the opportunities for public school students.



"We must preserve professional credibility by insisting upon the professionalism of all our education colleagues."

—REG WEAVER

A highlight of this year's RA was the address from Jason Kamras, the 2005 National Teacher of the Year. He said, "I see the fight to close the achievement gap not as an abstract policy struggle, but rather as a concrete, personal one."

Kamras is right. The struggle to provide a quality public education for all children is personal for all of us. If it weren't, we wouldn't grade papers on the weekend, dip into our own pockets for supplies, or advocate so hard for the reforms we believe will make every public school great.

Credibility is also very personal. This year, I stressed to delegates that we must preserve professional credibility by insisting upon the professionalism of all our education colleagues. This is critical to educating America's children and students and maintaining the support of our communities—particularly minority communities. In many ways, the future of our profession and our Association demands that we require our colleagues to demonstrate continued growth and commitment to our profession. One unprofessional, unprepared, or unwilling public school educator causes harm to all, leaving our students, profession, and Association at risk.

It is time for America to make education personal too. That's why I called on the nation to join with educators in an education covenant that will help us meet the expectations set for America's public schools. We can't do it alone. A quality public education for all children and students is a shared responsibility:

- If the nation calls on us to transform students into citizens who are equipped to make a contribution, we call on the nation for more parental involvement.
- If the nation calls for our support of the so-called No Child Left Behind law, we educators call on voters to elect politicians and policy makers who will stand with us in the fight to fix the law and provide it with adequate funding.
- If the nation calls for high-quality education support professionals, we call for an end to the privatization of public school services that raise costs and lower quality.
- If the nation wants us to provide lessons that enrich and inspire, we must have adequate funding; smaller class sizes; and books, labs, and technology that are up-to-date.
- If the nation calls on all educators to give our best to every child, which we will continue to do, we call on the nation to treat us like the professionals we are by providing salaries that are a realistic reflection of the great requirements, high skill, and invaluable worth of our jobs.
- If the nation calls for a qualified teacher in every classroom, we call for better working environments; professional development; and health care, retirement, and Social Security benefits that are secure.

Team NEA, as we begin the 2005–06 school year, let's give the students across this great nation our very best. Together, let us also call on the nation to do its best so that every child will have what they truly deserve—a great public school. Have a great year and know that NEA appreciates you, and so do I.

Reg Weaver

NEA PRESIDENT REG WEAVER

PHOTO: CALVIN KNIGHT

Good News, Great Ideas, and Inspiration

As teacher Sally Graven of Ohio points out in your cover story ("Good News," May), novels can be what history students best remember. At Oak Park High School in Illinois, we once had a two-year world history course so we could add novels and other works to the course of study.

Meeting students even 20 years later revealed the power of certain titles. They remembered exploring books like *Lord of the Flies; One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich; The Good Earth; Cry, the Beloved Country; Nectar in a Sieve; 1984;* and *Fahrenheit 451.*

Too often schools race through their history curriculum. Students need time to absorb and reflect on material in a course. Their ability to remember books they've read means they have learned useful material.

THOMAS FERGUSON
Oak Park, Illinois

It was wonderful to see DeLores Pressley featured in "Oprah and Me" (cover story, May). Oprah's "Tribute to Teachers" show was a milestone in my life as well. My students, who were featured and taped alongside me, were overwhelmed, as I was.

I've received calls from teachers from all over the United States who saw the story about my battle with breast cancer and my effort to keep on teaching. Many shared their own personal health stories. We agreed that continuing to teach during our illnesses was a driving factor in becoming well. Our students inspired us to continue—in spite of our illnesses. It's the best example of how our students really do give back to us.

PATRICIA ALONSO
Rutland, Vermont

DONATE THAT CELL PHONE

I read with interest Mary Rowland's article on choosing a new cell phone (Money, May). I'm a teacher who helped found a company, Cell Cycle, that raises money for charities and nonprofits. We conduct used cell phone drives around the country—one of our beneficiaries is school libraries, which raise money for new books or equipment.

Phones that can be refurbished or resold can earn 5 to 50 dollars or more. Those that no longer work can be broken down into components and recycled. One cell phone battery can contaminate the water required to fill an Olympic-sized swimming pool. The longer we keep these phones in use, the better. For more info, see www.cellularcycle.com.

COREY BROWN
Fremont, California

WHAT'S OVER THE RAINBOW?

I've been reading *NEA Today* since I was a college student in 1953, but my faith was shattered when I read your travel story ("Over the Rainbow," May). Your headline said "If your travel horizon is as flat and gray as Kansas...." Granted, the western one-fourth of the state is rather flat, but not gray, ever! And the "Balkans" in the southeastern part of the state and the "Little Alps" in the northeastern corner are aptly named.

ELEANOR MILLER
Topeka, Kansas

NO RECHARGING REQUIRED

I was dismayed by Dorothy Moody's "No" response to the question of whether the school year should be longer (Debate, May). In my 18 years of teaching experience and union service, I've never suffered "burnout." We don't "need" our summer breaks to "recharge our batteries" or "regain our patience." Most of my colleagues devote their summers to furthering their professional abilities or developing new curricula. Most of us spend at least four weeks each year, in addition to the traditional school year, completing professional duties.

DOUGLAS LOVE
Benicia, California

WHAT'S THE LESSON OF 9/11?

I was pleased to see "Teaching 9/11" (Spotlight, April), since I'm always interested in hearing about teaching current global events. However, Robert Peterson does not seem to be teaching about 9/11, but rather about global economic injustice.

HEARD ON THE BOARDS

No work means a zero

Students should not be permitted to do extra credit to make up what they didn't do in the first place. I give my students lots of opportunities to achieve beyond what is required: bonus questions on tests and extra credit responses of my choosing. But unless a student has a viable reason—absence, family crisis—not to turn an assignment in, I do not accept it, and the assignment gets a zero in my grade book. Aren't we supposed to be teaching kids responsibility too?

OXFORD, PENNSYLVANIA

School nurses count

Here in Okaloosa County, Florida, there is much talk about privatizing school nurses. It's a bad idea. Most of the county health nurses that go into the schools are only required to visit a school once or twice a week. What happens to the students who are asthmatic and must use a nebulizer at least twice during the school day? Neither privatizing the nurse's job nor cutting the budget for nurses is the answer. Safety of the students always comes first.

CRESTVIEW, FLORIDA

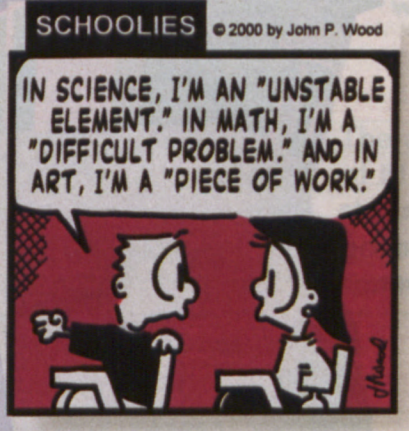
WANT TO WEIGH IN?
Chat with your colleagues on NEA's discussion boards at **www.neatoday.org/talkback.html**

The attacks of September 11 were carried out by people who were neither poor, nor acting on behalf of the world's poor. Their motivations were apparently religious and nationalistic. Let's dispel the myths of the right and left right now: Saddam did not aid Bin Laden, and Islamic fundamentalism terrorism is not retaliation for the sweatshops of Asia and the poverty of Africa. We can teach our kids to understand America's flaws and strengths honestly, without ascribing noble motivations to terrorists.

CHARLOTTE HONIGMAN-SMITH
San Francisco, California

STAMP OUT BULLYING, PERIOD

"Teaching Tolerance" (April) intimates the only harassment issue in schools deals with sexual identity. American



educators are focused on bullying and harassment of all students and staff. The The U.S. Department of Education reports that in 2001, 12 percent of students ages 12–18 reported someone at school used hate-related words against them. And they reported that the nature of this hate speech varied—from words related to race, religion, political view, and disability to sexual identity or orientation.

An anti-bullying Web site, www.bullypolice.org, reports that 90 percent of students felt being bullied caused social, emotional, or academic problems and that both bullies and victims have problems later in life. Each month, 250,000-plus students are physically attacked in schools. Yet 69 percent of students believe schools respond poorly to reports of bullying.

Our schools must teach students to interact with civility and respect among all students regardless of status, and we must model expectations, teach guidelines, and equip students with the skills to become positive "school citizens" that will transfer to the greater good of society in every community across America.

DIANE LENNING
Huntington Beach, California

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGIES HELP KIDS

As a kindergarten special education teacher, it makes me happy to see general education teachers positively embracing children with special needs in their classroom ("Power Tools," April). However, many are still scared because of the lack of training teachers have on accommodating and modifying instruction for all children, especially children who use assistive technologies in their classes. Your article will help bring awareness to all teachers and inspire us to learn more about these technologies.

HEATHER IRWIN
Orange, California

THE TEST DOESN'T FIT

Paraprofessionals like me are being judged on the results of a single test. But our role is much more complicated than that. Our everyday job includes:

- Chasing a child down the street and bringing him back to school safely.
- Dealing with a child who is having seizures.
- Stopping a child who is throwing chairs or desks and getting him out of the room for his own safety and the safety of others.
- Working with a child on the same skills month after month, even if it takes the entire year to learn the skill.

As a teacher assistant, I get to know how to read each child's body language and expressions. I can tell when they're frustrated, and when they need a little space. I can tell when they need to talk, and they need me to listen. Knowing that each child is different and finding special qualities in each one tells me that—in my heart—I am doing my job. The emotional well-being of students is far more important than any one test.

GERALDINE HUGHES
Riverside, Rhode Island

MEMBER IN THE NEWS

"I DON'T THINK I'M TAKEN AS seriously if I'm dressed down. When I dress more professionally, I teach better, I'm received better, and I show more respect for the profession."

—NORTH DAKOTA BAND TEACHER MARK BERNTSON *Associated Press, July 3, 2005*

Berntson was one of a handful of NEA delegates interviewed on teacher work attire at NEA's Representative Assembly in Los Angeles.

CURB THY SLANG

I find the use of "gonna" and "gotta" totally unacceptable in a magazine by educators for educators ("Risky Business," April, page 29). You make this Retired educator cringe!

MARILYN HAUSER
New Bern, North Carolina

CORRECTION

April's "Gen Y Guide to Retirement Security" incorrectly listed Richard Grasso as being former chair of the Securities and Exchange Commission. Grasso is former chair of the New York Stock Exchange.

LET'S TALK

Share your ideas, comments, and opinions with *NEA Today* in one of four ways:

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ILLUSTRATION: JOHN P. WOOD

upfront

Trends
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Wisdom
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Fed Up with the Feds

PAY UP OR BACK OFF.

That's what NEA, several affiliates, and a determined band of school districts are saying in a lawsuit aimed at loosening the grip of the so-called No Child Left Behind law (NCLB).

The districts, which educate tens of thousands of children in Laredo, Texas; Pontiac, Michigan; and a rural area of Vermont, contend that federal officials are ignoring the intent of Congress and forcing costly changes that hurt kids.

"It is taking away from my child's classroom subjects like music, art, foreign languages, social studies, and sports," said Texas parent Jose Zuniga. "Those activities are being replaced with high-stakes, high-stress tests that don't help my child learn."

The lawsuit, which NEA's attorneys are handling, argues that the U.S. Department of Education is violating a provision of the law that prevents the feds from "mandat[ing] a state or any subdivision thereof to spend any funds or incur any costs not paid for under this Act." Studies show NCLB actually comes with a hefty price tag. In Ohio and Texas, state taxpayers could be forced to ante up $1.5 and $1.2 billion respectively.

In June, the Education Department asked a judge to dismiss the lawsuit, claiming NEA doesn't have the legal "standing" to bring this lawsuit. Also, they argue the law doesn't prevent unfunded mandates—it just prohibits federal employees from adding extra requirements to those in NCLB itself without providing extra money. That same week, the House of Representatives voted to cut funding for NCLB below the level set three years ago.

A court hearing is set for October 19. Read more about the suit and sign a petition in support at www.nea.org/lac.

ONE IN SIX

That's how many kids live in poverty in America—the same now as 30 years ago, according to the 2004 *Kids Count* report put out by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Is that adequate yearly progress?

PHOTO COMPOSITE: JAMES P BLAIR AND GROFF CREATIVE

A SMART LOOK?

That girl sitting in English 1, crossing her Lucky legs and searching through her Aéropostale bag for the perfect shade of lipstick—do you ever wonder how much thought she puts into her look? As opposed to how little she expends on the textbook!

THE ANSWER: Maybe not much.

When school starts this year, some of your students will have had a professional hand in putting together their back-to-school wardrobe. Instead of relying on Mom to take them to the mall and offer gentle advice—"Not on your life!"—they've hired image consultants to do the sartorial thinking. "I can take the heat off parents," says Denver's Debra Lindquist, who's starting to see school-aged clients who understand image affects outcome. "You don't want to look like a runaway when you're trying to get a scholarship."

2.6

[STATISTIC]
The average number of **MONTHS** of student learning that go to **WASTE** over the summer.

HIP-HIP-HOORAY

GOOD NEWS FOR WORKERS!

ON THIS LABOR DAY, LET'S GIVE THREE CHEERS for workers and a rousing hip, hip, hooray for unions. They do make a difference—where it counts—in the classroom.

As if you needed proof... In states where most teachers are represented by unions, high-school students score about 50 points higher on the SAT, according to the Harvard Educational Review, and fourth-graders perform better on reading tests, the Institute for Wisconsin's Future found.

Maybe it's because unions boost salaries and fight for class-size limits and planning time. Or maybe it's because they provide dignity and security to professionals. Whatever the reason, unions represent a "research-based" approach to increasing student achievement—so let's see that in the No Child Left Behind law!

PHOTO TOP: STOCKDISC; PHOTO BOTTOM: DIGITAL VISION

Notepad

Feeling the Pain

Large, urban districts serving minority and low-income students bear a bigger burden in the No Child Left Behind law, as they struggle to meet more performance goals than less diverse districts, and also push kids with vastly different levels of preparation to the same proficiency level, says a new study from the Civil Rights Project at Harvard University, done with NEA's help.

The study recommends developing research-based, realistic expectations for improvement, as well as using multiple measures of performance. For more information, see www.civilrightsproject.harvard.edu.

Promising Achievement

Black and Hispanic 9-year-olds are closing the achievement gap in math and reading, according to the 2004 National Assessment of Educational Progress.

Overall, White, Black, and Hispanic 9-year-olds scored higher, on average, in 2004 than in any previous year. At the same time, the White-Black gap in reading decreased from 44 points in 1971 to 26 points, and the White-Hispanic gap fell to 21 points.

Have a great idea?

> Send it by mail:
NEA Today
1201 16th St., N.W.,
Washington, DC 20036

> Send it by e-mail:
neatoday@nea.org

No Bargain Here

Think you just got a deal on those rolled-back prices? Think again. You may have just helped to break unions and dismantle public schools.

THAT'S THE WORD from a new national campaign aimed at educating the public about Wal-Mart's labor practices. Wake-Up Wal-Mart (www.wakeupwalmart.com), which NEA has endorsed, says low wages and inferior health benefits are forcing Wal-Mart families into public housing, free school lunches, and Medicaid.

But if—like educators—its employees want to organize for a better workplace, well, that's a problem: Wal-Mart closed down the one store where workers voted to form a union.

In the meantime, the company's profits soar, thanks to the success of Wal-Mart and Sam's Club and billions of dollars in public tax breaks (read: cash that could have gone to public education). And the Walton family continues to contribute heavily to anti-public education efforts like private school voucher initiatives and anti-public education political action committees.

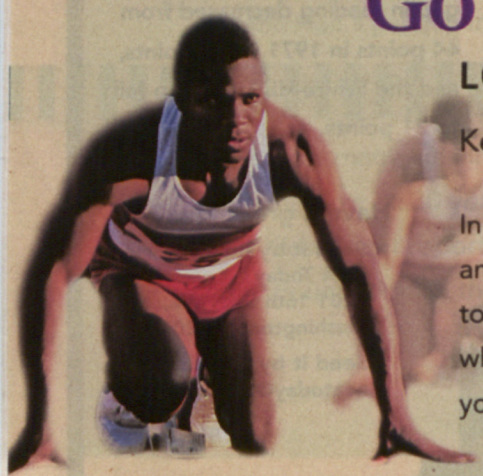
Wake-Up Wal-Mart, organized by the United Food and Commercial Workers, the union working to organize Wal-Mart's 1.2 million workers, hopes consumers will spread the word about the impact of the company on its employees, communities, and public schools—and urge Wal-Mart to become a more responsible corporate citizen. For more information, visit www.nea.org/topics/walmart.html. And to learn how other companies help public education, see "Shop Smart," page 55.

DID YOU KNOW?

Go Team!

LOOKING TO BEAT THE TEST THIS YEAR?

Keep this in mind: Winners wear **RED**.



In a study of the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens, British anthropologists found that winning competitors were more likely to wear red uniforms or body armor. Scientists don't know exactly why scarlet means success, but it's something to consider when you want students to go, go, go!

PHOTO TOP: AP WORLDWIDE; PHOTO BOTTOM: PHOTOLINK

VIRTUAL WILDERNESS

BEFORE VISITING THE OREGON CASCADES LAST YEAR, Teena Staller and her fifth-graders took a virtual walk in the woods. While their fingers hiked across a computer keyboard, they examined lichen, listened to forest sounds, learned hiking safety, and took notes on bark rubbing—all without leaving their classroom seats.

A lot of great stuff lies in wait on the Internet, but it takes time to find it and check for accuracy and grade-level appropriateness. With the help of the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA), you don't have to. NSTA is offering SciGuides, Web-based tool kits with links to roughly 100 Web sites already screened and evaluated that can complement your science lessons. Price tag: $5.95 apiece.

Subjects range from life cycles and organisms for elementary learners to atomic structure and chemical bonding for high school students. Each kit includes guides for using the material in class, sample student work, audio files, and accounts of how teachers, like Staller, have effectively incorporated the resources into lesson plans, lab experiments, and field trips.

Check out http://sciguides.nsta.org for more information.

—DANIEL MOISE

90

[STATISTIC]
The number of **KIDS** you typically find in a Haitian classroom.

The Qualifying Heat

IN THE RACE TO MEET THE "HIGHLY QUALIFIED" PROVISION OF THE SO-CALLED NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND LAW, nearly 600 Milwaukee paraprofessionals just got a new pit crew. A revved-up team of teachers, organized by the local union and paid by the district, is offering free workshops.

After 40 hours packed with behavior management and curriculum info, the assistants will earn an education support professional certificate and meet the law's requirements well before the end of this school year, the new federal finish line. The collaboration is working so well that the Milwaukee Teachers Education Association (MTEA) hopes other states will use it as a model.

For the school system, it's a bonus—they get educated employees. For the local union, it's a boon too—they're holding onto valuable members. But for the assistants, it's a godsend—they're keeping their jobs.

"Everybody wins here," said MTEA Assistant Director Cheryl Barczak.

Global Takes

Approved but ignored in Japan

Huge Chinese demonstrations broke out last spring when the Japanese government gave its okay to textbooks whitewashing Japan's war crimes in China, including the "rape of Nanking" when hundreds of thousands of civilians were slaughtered. But the Japanese government's position does not represent mainstream public opinion there, the Associated Press reports. Only 18 out of 11,102 Japanese junior high schools actually use the controversial text, and the Japan Teachers' Union denounced it.

Banned in Turkey

The Turkish Supreme Court has ruled Turkish teachers' union Egitim Sen can be banned for advocating children be taught in their own language. Kurdish groups want schools to include their language, but the country's constitution declares only Turkish is the mother tongue.

The union has been fighting a see-saw battle in the courts, supported by other Turkish unions and by Education International, of which NEA is a member.

Slimmer in Singapore

A campaign to fight fat among Singapore's children through mandatory exercise, weight monitoring, and healthier lunch programs seems to be working. Ten percent are overweight, down from 14 percent 10 years ago.

PHOTO COMPOSITE TOP: STOCKBYTE, PHOTODISC AND IMAGE SOURCE

Click! You've Got A Mentor

When Marchell Josie, former chairperson of the Ohio Student Education Association, started her student teaching program at Ursuline College, she realized early on that her college textbooks had not fully prepared her for the classroom.

FIRST 5 YEARS

So Josie (left), along with student Yvette Scott, retired teacher Nancy Wonson (right), and Ohio Education Association student organizer Joanne Gay, set up a cyber-mentoring program. About 50 retired teachers signed up initially and began communicating with student members by e-mail last September.

"Some of the retired teachers were hesitant because they had been out of the classroom for so long," Wonson said. "But nouns are still nouns and the multiplication table hasn't changed. Most of the actual teaching tools used 20 years ago are still going to work. The retirees put the spark there, and the students can apply it."

For more information, visit http://cybermentor.ohea.org.

—VANESSA ST. LEGER & DANIEL MOISE

TRADE SECRETS

The skills you use on the job can help another member with a dilemma on the home front.

THIS MONTH:

Technology support teacher Dan Phelon of Windsor, Connecticut, downloads on keeping your kids safe online.

Safe Surfing

STAKE OUT THE SITE. Monitor home computer use just as you do TV viewing. "Don't leave kids alone in their bedroom for three hours, because they can go to the wrong places," sometimes just by an errant keystroke, says Phelon. You may want to keep the computer in an open family area. Admittedly, it's harder as Web browsing goes portable and wireless.

BE A GUIDE. If your child has a research project, help identify the best sites. Your state library system may offer free access to online databases, a good place to start, as well as anything that ends with an .edu, says Phelon. "Many kids just go to Google...type in a few words, and get a million hits." With young children, you can help find a half-dozen or so worthwhile sites and bookmark them in the "favorites" section in your Web browser.

SEARCH THAT HISTORY. Anyone who's ever worked a computer lab can tell you, sometimes kids wander to inappropriate sites. A technique Phelon uses in schools works just as well at home: check the "history" section and the "cache" of your browser. This will tell you what Web sites and pages have been shown recently. Check the "help" menu if you need details on how to do this.

GOT A TIP TO SHARE?

We're looking for school nurses or other health professionals to advise fellow members on the best ways to **avoid getting sick during cold and flu season.** If you'd like to be considered, e-mail **joneil@nea.org** with your name and local, a brief description of what you do, and your top three tips.

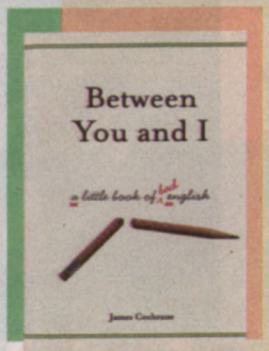
PHOTO TOP: SCOTT SHAW AND BRAND X PICTURES; ILLUSTRATION BOTTOM: INGO FAST

HOLIDAY GIFTS

TELL US MORE

You could serve coffee to a church congregation with the mugs you've collected over 20 Christmases in the classroom. And we know you have no idea what to do with the stuffed animals that students press on you when temps drop. (Use them to reward good behavior!) So tell us, what was the best holiday gift that you've ever received from a student, parent, or colleague? And, gulp, the worst? Please send your replies to neatoday-reply@list.nea.org.

BOOK FOCUS

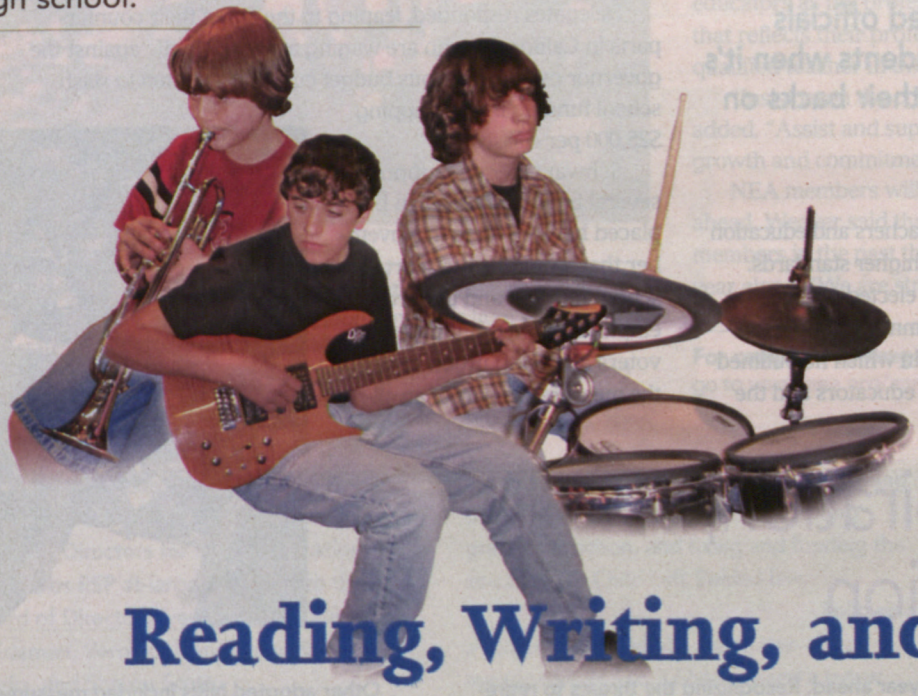


Word Crimes

BETWEEN YOU AND I, this book is a little devil, making us giggle at the persistent grammatical errors other people make. (Err, between you and ME—sometimes we make them too.) The author, James Cochrane, a British editor for more than 40 years, reminds us of a certain ninth-grade English teacher who shall remain nameless. He sets us straight on some of our most common mistakes: the difference between imply and infer, the rule on less and fewer, and why to avoid the "clownish" use of "irregardless." But what we like most is the needle he takes to overblown, multi-syllabic, make-me-sound-important "prior to's" and "restructuring's" that fill our administrative memos. Like this, about the rampant use of "incentivise"—"Anyone with an ear for language will want to avoid this hideous recent coinage...."

[STATISTIC]

The percentage of **YOUNG ADULTS** who said they could have **WORKED** harder in high school.



Get ready to twist and shout—the John Lennon Educational Tour Bus is rock-and-rolling around the country. Climb aboard and watch your students hone their music-making skills as they write and record songs and even produce their own music videos.

Reading, Writing, and Rockin'

The blue behemoth, sponsored in part by NEA's Read Across America, is truly a spectacle—the bus's interior boasts the latest recording and video gadgetry and oodles of top-notch instruments. During a pit stop at NEA's headquarters, members jammed aboard, looking at equipment that has seen Kid Rock, Carlos Santana, and, of course, Yoko Ono.

Joe Lyttle, a music teacher at Clifton T. Barkalow Middle School in New Jersey, organized a day in the mobile studio for five of his eighth-graders last spring. "The students were blown away by the experience—especially when they saw the video. It looked like something you'd see on MTV," he said. For more information, visit www.jlsc.com.

—DANIEL MOISE

PHOTOS BOTTOM: JOE LYTTLE

Put an End to 'Broken Promises'

Delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly send a strong message to lawmakers—do your part by funding great public schools.

They sent thousands of e-mails to members of Congress, raised more than $1.3 million to support pro-public education political candidates, and marched two miles to the office of Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger to protest his budget cuts.

Mostly, the more than 8,000 activist delegates to the 2005 NEA Representative Assembly (RA) in Los Angeles sent a message with their words and their deeds: legislators need to step up and properly fund public schools, just as teachers and education support professionals are pushing to meet higher standards.

"TEACHERS ARE tired of elected officials 'acting' like they care about students when it's election time and then turning their backs on campaign promises later."

—NEA PRESIDENT REG WEAVER

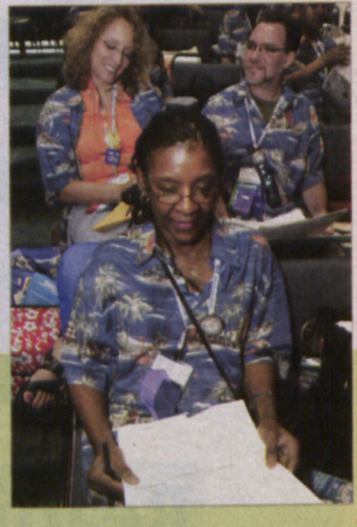
NEA President Reg Weaver, who was elected without opposition to another three-year term, hammered home the theme, beginning with a keynote address in which he outlined a six-point "education covenant" between educators and the public (for more, see page 7).

Two days later, delegates raised the cry again during a 90-minute rally on the floor of the RA when delegates from all 50 states joined Weaver in denouncing inadequate school funding.

"Teachers are tired of elected officials 'acting' like they care about students when it's election time and then turning their backs on campaign promises later," Weaver said. "Broken promises hurt our kids."

Delegates responded, leaping to the aid of their counterparts in California, who are waging a pitched battle against the governor over precipitous budget cuts that threaten to slash school funding by a whopping $25,000 per classroom.

Schwarzenegger supports several ballot initiatives to be placed before voters in November that would further curtail school funding and undercut employee rights. But potential voters are being urged to reject the measures as part of an all-out



RA '05: Part inspiration, mostly perspiration

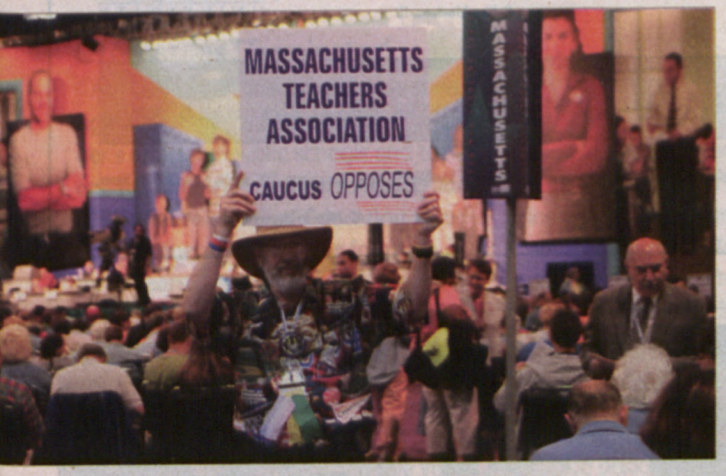
More than 8,000 delegates packed the Los Angeles Convention Center for NEA's four-day Representative Assembly (RA). They were treated to inspiring speeches, but for the most part, delegates poured their energy into sharing successful strategies and shaping NEA's agenda for the next year. During NEA's 84th Representative Assembly, delegates:

COMMITTED TO ACTION. Delegates honed the Association's resolutions and legislative agenda and adopted more than 50 new business items (NBIs), setting the course for the year ahead. Recognizing the threats to retirement security posed by privatization schemes for Social Security and pension plans, delegates passed a half-dozen NBIs committing NEA to ratcheting up its work on the issue. One of them called upon NEA to "oppose all legislative efforts to abolish defined-benefit plans and replace them with 401(k)-styled individual accounts." Retired Massachusetts member Bob Brousseau, who has 19 years of experience as a retirement board trustee, warned fellow delegates: "We are in a war."

Other adopted NBIs included measures aimed at improving opportunities for English-Language Learners, protecting students' free speech rights, and making health care "an organizational priority" by creating a task force to advise state and local affiliates.

ELECTED NEW LEADERS. Weaver, who was wrapping up a three-year term as President, ran unopposed for a second term and was declared elected. Others who ran unopposed and were declared elected: Dennis Van Roekel (NEA Vice President), Marsha Smith and

PHOTO TOP: CALVIN KNIGHT/NEA; BOTTOM: RICK RUNION/NEA



Clockwise, from top left: **NEA President Reg Weaver** outlines a six-point "education covenant"; representatives from all 50 states march to the offices of **California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger**; Massachusetts delegates prepare to vote; and delegates from Florida follow the debate.

blitz by the California Teachers Association (CTA). Delegates in Los Angeles, many of whom face budget cuts at home, made sure to leave their mark on Golden State politics. Among them, they wrote some 40,000 postcards to friends and colleagues in California, urging them to vote against the ballot initiatives.

Then they took to the streets. After the rally on the RA floor, about 600 delegates marched out of the Convention Center and down Wilshire Boulevard to Schwarzenegger's Los Angeles office to deliver resolutions opposing the governor's actions. Walking through the city streets as Angelenos idled in their cars, the demonstrators drew applause and supportive honks from onlookers—and this comment from a Los Angeles police officer: "Our kids appreciate it!"

When the RA ended, delegates set to work bringing Weaver's six-point covenant to life in their communities. Weaver urged delegates to take these actions: transform students into citizens who will make a contribution; elect policy makers who will help fix and fund No Child Left Behind; stand with the nation's ESPs in their battles against privatization; and ensure that the lessons taught in the nation's classrooms are interesting and enriching. He also called on the nation to treat educators as the professionals they are and provide fair pay that reflects their professionalism, and to make sure there is a qualified teacher in every classroom.

"Insist upon the credibility of your colleagues," Weaver added. "Assist and support them, but urge their continued growth and commitment to our profession."

NEA members will be making even more noise in the year ahead. Weaver said that NEA gained more than 92,000 new members in the past three years, including 45,000 in the last year alone. "We are strong and getting stronger," he said. nea

For complete coverage of the Representative Assembly, go to **www.nea.org/annualmeeting/raaction**.

Mike Billirakis (Executive Committee), and Sally Pestana (at-large candidate for NEA Board of Directors for higher education). Elected as ESP at-large members to the NEA Board of Directors were Art Goff, Ray Heideman, Veronica Henderson, Rebecca Marks, and Sharon Scott.

SENT A MESSAGE (OR FIVE). More than 17,000 messages were fired off to federal and state lawmakers at a Legislative Action Center set up in the Convention Center. NEA's Great Public Schools (GPS) Booth also received heavy traffic. Delegates visiting the booth honed their knowledge of NEA's GPS initiative, and many signed up to become GPS activists back home. The components of NEA's GPS initiative are closing the student achievement gaps, raising the pay of all teachers and ESPs, building membership, reaching out to minority communities, promoting grassroots action, and fixing and funding the so-called No Child Left Behind law.

PASSED A BYLAW CHANGE. Following a spirited floor debate, delegates—by a margin of 4,943 to 2,664—passed a bylaw amendment that allows the NEA Executive Committee "to affiliate an organization that does not elect its own officers by secret ballot if certain conditions are met." The vote allows NEA's New York affiliate, NEA/NY, to consider a possible merger with the AFT-affiliated New York State United Teachers.

RECHARGED THEIR BATTERIES. Delegates got a dose of inspiration from speeches by NEA 2005 ESP of the Year Kathleen Lange, 2005 Teacher of the Year Jason Kamras, and Cheryl Brown Henderson (below), recipient of the NEA Friend of Education Award. The daughter of Oliver Brown, plaintiff in the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* case, Henderson urged delegates to "internalize the premise" of equality embodied in the case, saying "No piece of legislation, no Supreme Court decision, can do the work that has to be done on the ground."

PHOTOS: SCOTT ISKOWITZ/NEA

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September 15th through October 15th

CELEBRATE LIFE. CAPTURE EVERY MOMENT.

Your students can capture the richness of Latino heritage and

WIN UP TO $2000.

for more information and official contest rules, please visit History.com/classroom/hhm

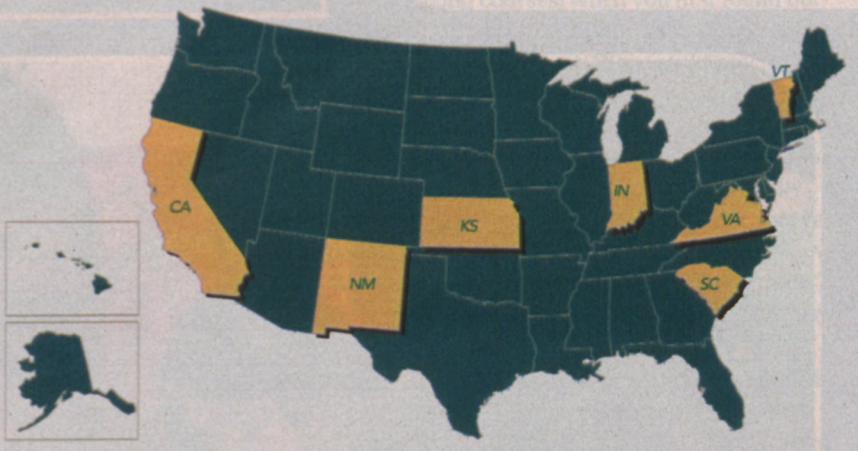
THE HISTORY CHANNEL en Español

THE HISTORY CHANNEL.

STATE report

If at First You Don't Succeed...

KANSAS Students are the winners after the Kansas Supreme Court ordered the state Legislature back for a special session to boost school spending. Legislators balked, but after being deluged with e-mails from hundreds of **Kansas NEA (KNEA)** members, they finally approved $290 million in new money for schools. "We have a long way to go, but we are moving forward to keep the promise to our next generation of Kansans," said KNEA President Christy Levings. The state Supreme Court had ruled in January that public school funding was inadequate.



CTA Battles 'Terminator'

CALIFORNIA Raising the ante in their fight against Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's attack on public schools and teachers, the **California Teachers Association (CTA)** State Council of Education voted to raise dues by $60 a year for up to three years. The "Terminator" has called a special election for November in which he and his big business allies are pushing three initiatives. One would cut school spending by $4 billion, a second would increase the probationary period for new teachers from two to five years, and a third would restrict the use of union dues for political advocacy. During NEA's Representative Assembly in July, CTA members, joined by hundreds of NEA colleagues from around the country, marched to the governor's office in protest (for more, see page 16).

A+ Membership Work

VERMONT The **South Burlington Educators' Association (SBEA)** get an A+ for diligent member organizing—signing up a near-perfect 97 percent of the district's teachers (213 of 220). The secret? Reaching out and talking to every new teacher in the district, says Rich Wise, SBEA president. At the teacher's orientation, Wise talks up how the Association provides services and helps build professional relationships. In their first few years, teachers are particularly likely to need Association advice regarding their license, probationary requirements, and other legal matters. "We want them to know we value them," he says.

Pay Parity for Unemployed

INDIANA When an Indiana state agency tried to penalize teachers who were still receiving 12-month paychecks after losing their jobs, the **Indiana State Teachers Association (ISTA)** stepped in—and got results. Days after meeting with ISTA officials, Governor Mitch Daniels reversed the decision and restored payment of unemployment compensation benefits to school staff who had merely opted to receive their salary over a 12-month period, rather than nine months. Otherwise, laid-off teachers still receiving the remainder of their paychecks (for work already done, mind you) would have had that amount subtracted from their unemployment benefits or been forced to wait three extra months to apply for benefits.

Voucher Bill Quashed

SOUTH CAROLINA Three years of television, radio, newspaper, and billboard advertising by the **South Carolina Education Association (SCEA)** paid off in defeating a House-sponsored voucher-and-tuition-tax-credit plan. While funds poured in from out-of-state pro-voucher sources, local education and business groups helped build their own grassroots movement to oppose the effort. Members and friends of the SCEA gathered more than 3,000 signatures on anti-voucher petitions, and delivered thousands of e-mails and telephone calls to House members. A broad bipartisan vote kept the plan from moving forward to the Senate. The plan was tabled in the House and cannot be considered again.

They Did It!

NEW MEXICO Round One goes to New Mexico education support professionals. After filing a group grievance—and enduring a long, tense public hearing—33 school secretaries and other support staff in the Espanola School District helped tip the balance in a dispute over wages and promotion policies. The result? One-time bonuses for all district employees ranging from 2 to 4.5 percent—a total of $370,000 of well-deserved compensation. "People now know the power of speaking up collectively," said UniServ consultant Charles Goodmacher. At press time, though, the district superintendent was challenging the school board's decision. (Yes, you read that right.)

This Governor Gets It

VIRGINIA The **Virginia Education Association (VEA)** helped win a 3 percent salary increase for teachers that might have been lost in the legislature, while also helping to reinstitute language in the state code that stipulates salary appropriations not be used for other purposes. Gov. Mark Warner had proposed $54.8 million to assist localities in giving raises to teachers next year, but the House and Senate cut that by a combined $17 million. VEA activists helped restore the budget proposed by the governor, and raises will go into effect December 1.

ILLUSTRATIONS: PHOTODISC; IMAGE CONSTRUCTION: GROFF CREATIVE, INC.

The tom joyner Foundation

Get prepared at one of these 7 campuses:

Clark Atlanta University, Atlanta, GA
Bowie State University, Bowie, MD
Jackson State University, Jackson, MS
Johnson C. Smith University, Charlotte, NC
Cheyney State University, Cheyney, PA
Tennessee State University, Nashville, TN
Harris-Stowe State College, St. Louis, MO

NEA & Tom Joyner Foundation

Hey Teachers—Get Certified!

$700,000 Scholarship Program

The Foundation and the National Education Association believe that pre-K through 12 curriculum should be taught by licensed teachers. We recognize that in certain urban, suburban, and rural communities not every teacher is licensed. In an effort to help teachers become fully licensed, the Foundation and NEA have agreed to join forces to assist teachers who desire to gain full licensure.

The Foundation and NEA are offering financial assistance in the following areas:

- Tuition for specified courses
- Books
- Support for preparing to take a state teacher licensure examination

To be eligible for this program you must be currently employed as a teacher in a K-12 public school, or currently enrolled in an accredited school of education and have completed course work for licensure. Scholarship winners must commit to teach a minimum of three years in identified communities, to be locally determined.

Scholarships will be made through Historically Black Colleges and Universities in selected areas throughout the United States. If you are interested in participating in this program, please go to **www.nea.org/joyner** and fill out the attached short questionnaire, and we will determine your eligibility and an appropriate local HBCU for you to work through.

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'Highly Qualified' Victory

Title I paraprofessionals' deadline is pushed back to the end of the school year.

Paraprofessionals in Title I schools will have several extra months to meet the "highly qualified" rules of the so-called No Child Left Behind law (NCLB), thanks to an NEA campaign that included grassroots pressure and an intense national lobbying effort.

"I'm ecstatic," says Paula Monroe, an education support professional member of the NEA Board of Directors who helped pushed for the change.

Under NCLB, instructional paras in the federally funded Title I program must have an associate's degree or two years of college, or pass a rigorous test or local assessment.

The new ruling doesn't change that standard, but it pushes the deadline back from January 8, 2006, to the end of the 2005–06 school year, which is the deadline for teachers to meet their own highly qualified requirements.

> **"IT'S A HUGE CHANGE** for the paras who have not yet had a chance to meet the new standard, for our teachers who work with them, and for their students."
> — PAULA MONROE

"It's a huge change for the paras who have not yet had a chance to meet the new standard, for our teachers who work with them, and for their students," says Monroe.

The extra time, she says, will help many paras reach the new federal academic standards. Those standards—two years of college or the equivalent—are much higher than the standards under which many paras were hired. And paras had to qualify very fast.

"If you started [taking courses] when you first found out about the law in 2002, your chance of finishing in time would be slim to none," Monroe points out. "You would practically have to go to school full-time while you also work full-time."

Some districts, including Prince George's County in Maryland, had already told paras they would have to move to jobs in non-Title I schools if they were not "highly qualified" by July 1, to avoid shifting people in the middle of the school year.

"Some people could have had to drive many miles to new jobs," says Wanda Newman, a chapter rep for 1,100 Prince George's County paras, including 600 Title I paras. "They were very upset. Some don't have cars because paras are underpaid." Newman read about the deadline extension on the NEA ESP listserv. She spread the news, and union staffer Adolfo Botello got the school administration to rescind the transfers.

NEA lobbyist Steve Nousen says the federal Department of Education has been extremely reluctant to change NCLB rules, but this time it bowed to bipartisan pressure from Congress.

The leaders of that effort included two Republicans from Idaho, Rep. Michael Simpson and Sen. Mike Crapo, both of whom were endorsed by NEA when they ran for office. The change was announced in a letter from a federal education official to Rep. Simpson, saying, "your suggestion is reasonable and practical" and promising that the deadline would be pushed back.

"Rep. Simpson and Sen. Crapo are public school graduates and good advocates for public education," says former Idaho Education Association President Kathy Phelan. "We disagree with them on many things, but they are open and accessible, and when we find points of agreement, they are willing to spend their political capital to get things done."

—ALAIN JEHLEN

There's more on paras and NCLB (also called the Elementary and Secondary Education Act or ESEA) at www.nea.org/esphome/issues/eseapara.html. To sign up for the ESP listserv, go to www.nea.org/esphome/members/esplist.html.

More ESP stories in this issue:

- Milwaukee paras get ahead on meeting NCLB regs – *Page 13*
- New Mexico support staff unite to win bonuses – *Page 19*
- Meet Kathleen Lange, ESP of the Year – *Page 40*

PHOTO: PHOTODISC

Discipline problems weigh on educators today more than ever. But don't despair—there's plenty you can do to knock your challenges down to size.

The D Wo

BY MARY ELLEN FLANNERY

On her first day in Misti French's Kentucky classroom, little Sandra with the thick glasses and vacant look kicked, pinched, and punched her shocked classmates. Before lunch, she mutely refused to write a topic sentence. After lunch, she stalked away from the playground swings, past the fence, toward home.

French, a first-year teacher at Herndon's South Christian Elementary School who has taught her third-graders to play African drums, write poetry, and love school, resorted to holding the troubled child's hand all day. But who's going to hold French's hand? Even in her graduate-level education classes, French says, "Nobody told me how to deal with Sandra."

It's not just new educators who struggle with classroom management and discipline issues. Day in and day out, even veterans wonder what to do with students who constantly disrespect, disrupt, and demean. Almost 80 percent of teachers told Public Agenda pollsters that less instruction is accomplished these days because of the disruptive environment in schools; one in three report having considered quitting because of it. And while many struggle with the occasional handful of unruly kids, some navigate entire schools that seem on the edge.

"It feels like the inmates are running the asylum," complained one frustrated high school teacher to her colleagues in NEA's Works4Me online community—a weekly forum for members' questions and answers available at www.nea.org/tips/library.html. "Profanity is tolerated, rampant, and loud. Students (verbally) assault teachers regularly....They steal, cheat, lie, and vandalize, use cell phones in class and keep iPod earphones dangling from their ears...."

There's the feeling among educators that things are worse now than they've ever been, and they aren't wrong, says Jim Garbarino, a Cornell University professor and author of *Raising Children in a Socially Toxic Environment.*

Garbarino points, in part, to an "erosion of adult authority" in today's society that makes it more and more difficult for teachers and other educators to do their job. Although research on the declining behavior of students is scarce, Garbarino says one survey found 82 percent of adults agree kids are less respectful.

"Teachers probably have to do more to establish their individual authority because they don't have a cultural foundation to build upon," Garbarino says.

Some blame parents—in fact, 82 percent of teachers in the Public Agenda poll say parents simply don't teach their kids discipline. Many kids come to school with little regard for rules. "They're used to getting their own way," says Sheila Cornelison, an algebra teacher in northern Alabama, who trains colleagues in Alabama Education Association-sponsored I Can Do It! Workshops—seminars offered by

PHOTO: DANNY PECK

some state Associations to help teachers with classroom management.

Unfortunately, she and others say, gone are the "good old days," when teachers could rely on parents to catch their backs. Now, one out of two teachers report having been accused by parents themselves of unfair discipline.

But then, in the good old days, parents mostly lived together. Televisions didn't blare profanity. Popular music didn't boast of teenage mamas. Little girls didn't buy thong underwear at the mall. As society's ailments grow more complex, as more families live in homeless shelters and more college grads stand in unemployment lines, as more people shun religion and celebrate cell phones—and, say sociologists, as people care less for each other generally—children's problems have simply grown weightier.

Who can guess what's going on in the life of the Florida 5-year-old who, to the country's horror, ended up in handcuffs after throwing a tantrum in her classroom?

Experts say it all points to an unhappy zenith in American culture—and the implications, they note, are dramatic. "The climate that we create in our homes, and in our communities, and in our schools can help kids learn to share and create and be good human citizens"—or it can set the stage for bad things to come, says Barbara Coloroso, a former Colorado teacher who speaks nationally about discipline and environment.

So what's an educator to do

to help keep the outlook bright—and happily survive classroom life, too? "A lot of people are searching for solutions," says Lincoln, Nebraska, third-grade teacher Randy Gordon. The good news: There *are* solutions—dozens of them—many tried and true, many dreamed up by your own colleagues. Just read on.

twenty-five tips

The D Word

twenty-five tips

To start the year right, check out these tips from your colleagues.

THE RAMPANT EYE-ROLLING, LIP-TWITCHING, AND MORE OVERT, "YOU TALKING TO ME?"—ARE ALL SIGNS THAT THE KIDS ARE "DISSING" YOU. HOW DO YOU BRING AN AIR OF CIVILITY BACK INTO THE CLASSROOM?

1 MODEL BETTER BEHAVIOR. When Washington State middle-school teacher Julie Moore asks her students to "please turn around and stop talking," inevitably they respond, "I'm just asking a question!" So she models the appropriate answer, "Sorry, Mrs. Moore, I'll get back to work." Eventually, it sinks in.

2 TURN THE TABLES ON THEM. A few years ago, in one of Sheila Cornelison's algebra classes, there was one strong-willed student who just wouldn't pay attention. So Cornelison told him, "I think it'd be really good if you taught this lesson....I'll give you this material and you can take it home and prepare. If you have any questions, come to me."

A week later, when it was his turn to teach his classmates how to measure angles, he faced the same disrespectful whispers and hoots that he had meted out. And did he get mad! Suddenly, the consequences of his behavior were clear.

"He made a big turn-around," Cornelison said.

3 CUT CURSING SHORT. Security guard Laura Vernon doesn't give a darn for cussing. Radios and televisions may blare the worst of weak vocabularies—and kids may think they can repeat the same s*!& in school hallways and classrooms—but Vernon says she simply will not stand for it.

"Excuse me?" she says firmly to any potty-mouthed teen near her post at North Division High School in Milwaukee. "If you use a profane word around me, you have to apologize."

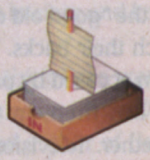
When kids come from homes where there's not a lot of respect shown, they come to school with the same disrespect for the school environment. Still, Vernon can keep them on track, she notes, with caring and consistency.

"If you set parameters, they'll stay within those parameters. You just have to be consistent with that," she says. And, she adds, "If everybody would do that, you wouldn't hear the swearing."

Vernon

4 DON'T ARGUE WITH THEM. It takes one fool to backtalk and two to make a conversation out of it, says Moore, a special-education teacher at Central Kitsap Junior High outside Seattle.

IT STARTS AS A MURMUR, GROWS TO A RUMBLE, AND THEN FINALLY, THE HEAVING DUMP TRUCK OF DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR RATTLES UP AND DOWN YOUR CLASSROOM, NOISILY SQUASHING YOUR LESSON PLANS. HOW DO YOU SQUELCH THE PROBLEM BEFORE IT SHIFTS INTO HIGH GEAR?



5 WHEN TSK-TSK DOESN'T WORK (and does it ever?), try task-task. New Jersey member Marcy Treen will ask her troublemaker to pass out papers or deliver a note to another teacher. Then, when the student returns to her desk, she has renewed focus for the work at hand.

6 CHIME YOUR CLASS QUIET. A few weeks before summer, LaJoyce Weatherspoon's sixth-graders have vacation on their mind. And so, this Clarksville, Tennessee, teacher indulges them—but with a chime and a silver stick by her side for the giddiness to come.

Find your dream destination online, she directs, and then create a computer presentation to share its language and culture. They do, but while one fair-haired

PHOTOS AND ILLUSTRATIONS: #2 MATTHIAS TUNGER; #3 PETER ZUZGA; #5 KEVIN CURRY; #6 ALICIA M. ARCHULETA; #8 PHOTOALTO

Weatherspoon

boy in the back row flies off to Great Britain, flipping through Web sites with Union Jacks and Cornish pasties, his neighbor sails off track, sidelined by a pop-up Baby Phat ad.

Baby Phat!

While heads turn, the Web-fed oohs and aahs gain disrespectful volume. Then, without so much as a look, Weatherspoon runs her handy silver stick across the hanging chimes on her desk.

"Quiet time," one student says.

Calm reigns again.

7 PLAN, PLAN, AND PLAN SOME MORE. Idle hands are the devil's tools—and a real demon in the classroom. Never be caught with nothing to do, advises Melanie Hazen, a Tennessee media specialist who offers I Can Do It! training to her colleagues.

When Hazen taught English at Montgomery Central High School, she sliced up a stack of vocabulary words and dropped them into a cup. Then, when she had a few spare minutes, she'd pull out words and her kids would race through their dictionaries to look for definitions.

"If they're busy-busy, they don't have time to disrupt class. So, make sure you over-plan," Hazen advises.

8 REFER TO YOUR UNION CONTRACT. If a kid constantly disrupts your lessons—to the point where none of the children can learn—you may reach a point where you want him out of there. When your principal is supportive, it may be easy to get that eviction notice. When you're on your own, talk to your Association.

In Florida, where state law allows teachers to remove unruly students, the Palm Beach County contract sets guidelines to make it work. When a student interferes with a teacher's ability to teach, or classmates to learn, then that student must be removed until a committee decides to return him or her. Any teacher who removes 25 percent of the total class enrollment must receive training on better management techniques.

What's Hot!

SINGLE-SCHOOL CULTURE: Started in South Florida, the "single-school" project asks all the adults on a campus to start using the same rules consistently. What does tardy mean? Is a student out of uniform if his or her shirt is untucked? Does everybody have a pass when they're out in the hallways? When everybody is on the same page, then students can't feign any confusion about the rules.

DR. PHIL: Everybody's watching Dr. Phil McGraw's hit TV show as he deals with 4-year-olds who bite, teens who steal, and parents who can't control their children. But many of his common-sense parenting tips apply equally well in the classroom. Find out what kids like—ice cream, recess, time on the computer—and use that information, says Dr. Phil. When you control "their currency," then you can control their behavior. Be consistent with your rules and your response.

What's Not...

ZERO-TOLERANCE POLICIES: Sounded good, didn't it? But, while zero-tolerance policies were intended to rid schools of weapons and drugs, "when administrators suspend first-graders for carrying fingernail files, the policies quickly become meaningless," says Jerry Newberry of NEA's Health Information Network. Indeed, from Texas and Mississippi, to Indiana and Pennsylvania, lawmakers are rethinking rigid approaches to school discipline and attempting to balance their policies with a measure of whether the student wanted to do harm or not.

PADDLING: Some might miss the days when you could end a "discussion" with a smack. "It is a consequence that students fear and respect," says Indiana teacher Chip Lewis. But, even in Southern states where paddling has long been legal—if not often used—the practice is getting whacked. In North Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas, school boards are talking about a stop to spanking—if only to avoid litigation.

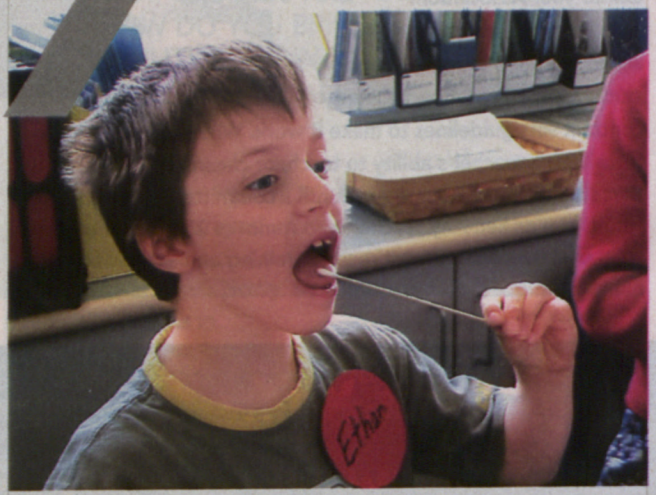
PHOTO: STOCKBYTE

The D Word

9 **SPICE UP YOUR LESSONS.** Every year, a Connors-Emerson School parent, who also works at the local medical research lab in Bar Harbor, Maine, comes to Karen Barter's second-grade class to do a real-life lesson on hand-washing. The kids sit rapt as they collect and count bacteria in the classroom sink, on its doorknob, on their own hands.

Who could have guessed that an hour in the backyard would leave 10,000 bacteria on Jalique's hands? Fascinating! (Or that the sink drain offers more than a million of the little creepy-crawlies?)

"They were totally in the flow," Barter recalls.



10 **FEED A GENTLER SPIRIT.** Even your best-behaved students can turn into John Blutarsky—the John Belushi character from *Animal House*—when they sit down in the cafeteria. But Nina Boyers, a Michigan paraprofessional with more than 25 years of experience, has a few tips to keep the caf under control.

Teachers should walk their students all the way into the lunchroom, rather than drop them off at the door, and students should be required to sit with their classmates—not kids from other homerooms or grades. The best deterrent is to have an administrator present, if possible.

THERE MUST BE AN EPIDEMIC OF HEARING LOSS IN THIS COUNTRY BECAUSE TEACHERS OF ALL AGES COMPLAIN THAT STUDENTS ACT AS IF THEY'VE NEVER HEARD THE WORD "HOMEWORK." HOW DO YOU GET THEM TO PICK UP THEIR PENCILS?

11 **NIP EXCUSES IN THE BUD.** A one-liner usually does the trick, says Nebraska teacher Randy Gordon. "Bummer," he tells a pleading third grader. "But I had hockey practice," comes the retort. "Bummer," Gordon repeats, shaking his head with empathy.

WONG

The Doctor Is In

You need to take control of your classroom on the very first day of school,

says Harry Wong, classroom management guru and author of the wildly popular *First Days of School*. Wong's prescription for a successful start:

GREET EACH STUDENT at the door and direct them to assigned seats.

TELL THE CHILDREN to read and start the assignment on the board. The first few minutes of every class period are "prime time," says Wong, and you shouldn't waste them taking attendance, making announcements, answering questions, or collecting papers. On the first day, the assignment may be filling in a card of personal information.

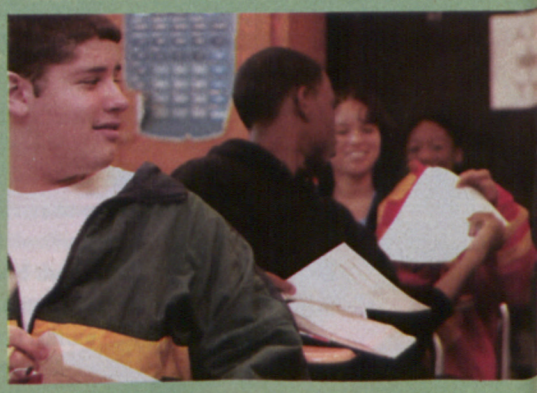
INTRODUCE YOURSELF to the group.

TEACH YOUR FIRST LESSON—which should be on how things work in your classroom, your procedures, your rules, consequences, and rewards.

PRACTICE YOUR PROCEDURES. If you decide that students should pass papers across the rows, instead of up the aisles, as Wong recommends (it prevents pokes in the back), then rehearse that procedure. Have a script to walk students through each step, "We will start with everybody in the first row..." Eventually, you won't have to say a word!

See more from Harry Wong online!

Read his answers to top discipline concerns at **www.nea.org/neatodayextra/discipline.html**.



"Everybody knows the best way to stop arguing is not to pay attention to the argument," says Gordon, a teacher at Cavett Elementary in Lincoln and a trainer of Discipline with Love and Logic, a behavior management program.

In his class, kids know the drill. At the start, homework should be handed in. If you didn't do it, you'll have to complete the assignment during recess and fill out a paper explaining what happened, why it's a problem ("Now Mr. Gordon doesn't know if I understand decimals..."), and how you intend to prevent it from happening again.

And yet, inevitably, one or two will try to explain why they didn't do their work and why, why, why, they shouldn't have to stay in at recess. They will get no satisfaction from Gordon. They will barely get any response at all, which is the key to his successful discipline style, he says.

"As soon as a teacher starts to lecture, 'I told you not to lose that, I told you to put it in the backpack,' there's not a kid around who won't jump in because there's a chance to win," Gordon says.

Gordon likes "Bummer!"—it suits the 30-something teacher. But it doesn't matter what one-liner you choose—as long as you swiftly turn your attention elsewhere after delivering it.

IT DOES TAKE A VILLAGE TO RAISE A CHILD—YOU, THE PARENTS, AND YOUR ADMINISTRATOR. BUT HOW DO YOU MAKE NATO OUT OF THESE OFTEN-OPPOSED FACTIONS?

12 GO ON HOME VISITS. During the summer at South Heights Elementary School in Henderson, Kentucky, every teacher, including Head Start teacher Wendy Mitchell, visits students and parents at home. That way, the first contact with parents is a casual and friendly one.

"We put on our South Heights T-shirts and just sit on the porch, or go inside, whatever the family prefers. It just builds that feeling of respect and mutual trust," says Mitchell.

Thirteen SEND A CARD. Before school starts, Tennessee's Hazen pre-addresses blank postcards for each family and then, as the weeks go by, she jots quick, friendly notes. "If you do the work at the front end, it doesn't take two minutes," Hazen says.

14 PREPARE A PARENT CONTRACT. Surely you spell out the rules for students. That's Discipline 101, right? But you also should tell parents what you expect. Each August, LaJoyce Weatherspoon sends home a contract for students and parents to sign, outlining her rules and consequences. "Folders are required and worth 25 percent of the final grade. Folders are issued by the teacher one time only. If lost or damaged, it is the student's responsibility to replace it," she warns.

15 GIVE A BONUS. If phone calls and visits to umpteen parents aren't for you, take a tip from New Jersey social studies teacher Michael D'Amato, who gets parent buy-in and better student achievement at the same time. D'Amato develops study guides for each test, goes over them with students two days before the exam, and then sends them homeward. Kids who go over the guide with a parent or family member and get it signed earn a five-point boost on their test score.

"It makes it convenient for families to quickly quiz their children on the material," says D'Amato, a middle school teacher in Linden, New Jersey, and author of a recently published book of classroom tips (*The Classroom*; www.theclassroombook.com).

16 BRING THE BOSS ON BOARD. Sit down with your principal before school starts and share your classroom rules, suggests Alabama's Cornelison. Let her know you have strategies to handle problems, but that you also might send students to the principal's office. Ask your principal, "How are you going to feel about this?" And make sure that he or she understands what makes you crazy. Maybe it's swearing. Maybe it's sass. If your administration knows your hot-button issues, it's more likely that they'll support your enforcement.

PHOTOS AND ILLUSTRATIONS: #9 KAREN BARTER; #10 PHOTODISC; #11 STOCKBYTE; #14 PICTUREQUEST; #15 PHOTODISC; #16 CREATAS

The D Word

17 MAKE YOUR REFERRALS STICK. Nothing is more frustrating then sending an uncontrollable kid to the office—and then have the troublemaker bounce right back five minutes later. But you often can get the results you want if you just ask for them, says Steven Johnston, a high school discipline dean in Quincy, Massachusetts.

That means written instructions—"Jimmy's disrupting my class," and "Please keep him out of my room until ____."

Some may worry their notes will never get delivered. But in Johnston's experience, students know they'll be in a lot more trouble if they throw notes away. And it's best not to have another student deliver the message because that sets up a potential conflict between the two students.

Of course, if your school disciplinarian has no safe, supervised place to put disruptive students, even clear communications won't solve the problem.

THE LIFE STORIES OF SOME OF YOUR STUDENTS COULD BE WRITTEN BY HOLLYWOOD'S *NYPD BLUE* PRODUCERS. AND YOU WONDER HOW THESE KIDS FEEL ABOUT IT? THEY'RE MAD AS HECK! AND THEY TELL YOU SO ALL THE TIME WHEN THEY DISRUPT YOUR CLASS AND SMACK THEIR CLASSMATES. SO WHAT DO YOU DO WITH AN ANGRY CHILD?

18 INTERVENE EARLY. Even in preschool, it's all too obvious who might have trouble graduating—and it's often not a matter of skills, but behavior. So, while you hesitate to "label" small children, you should try to help students get services as quickly as possible, says Head Start's Wendy Mitchell.

It is possible for 3-year-olds to get Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)—and it's a good idea when necessary, she says. "More and more, we're seeing problems with our youngest children—we want to take care of them early on so they can adjust," she adds.

19 USE A COOL-DOWN ROOM. In East Hartford, Connecticut, where increasing urban poverty is contributing to increasingly bad behavior in the classroom, Association leaders are responsible for the implementation of new "support rooms" in every school. When a child's behavior gets out of control—and you know that point when you reach it—a teacher can send him or her to an isolated room on campus.

There, a trained support professional (not a certified teacher) calms the student down and also provides some academic tutoring, typically for a few hours. When they decide the child is ready, he or she can return to the classroom.

"It really is a support for the student—and a support for the classroom. When you have somebody who is preventing you from teaching, you really need to do something," said Association President Cheryl Prevost.

20 OFFER A CLEAN SLATE. Angry children benefit from a predictable classroom atmosphere, where the rules and consequences don't vary. But let them know every day provides a new chance to start again, says Harry Wong, a California special education teacher, not to be confused with the *other* Harry Wong, see page 26.)

21 FIND THE TRIGGERS. Do a functional behavioral assessment, suggests Katherine Bishop, an Oklahoma special education teacher. Keep track of the bad behavior, noting when it happens. That way, you can get closer to identifying the trigger—typically it's either to avoid a task or get attention. If you don't know how to do this kind of assessment, get help from the special education department in your school or district.

22 INFORM YOUR ASSOCIATION. If you have an aggressive student, the Association can write a "state of danger" letter, putting your school on notice that a potential danger exists, suggests Oklahoma's Bishop.

23 GIVE THEM SPACE. When kids get angry, give them a little space to calm down. Washington State's Moore has a stuffed chair in a corner of her room where kids can sit down and take deep

PHOTOS AND ILLUSTRATIONS: #17 STOCKBYTE; #18 BRAND X PICTURES; #19 COMSTOCK IMAGES; #24 CREATAS; #25 BOB YOSAY

breaths. She also lets her eighth-graders walk the school's track, so they can calm down, in a safe place away from their peers.

Along the same lines, always give them a way out: "Do you want to sit down or go to the principal's office?" Often, when you hand them the power to choose, they'll make the right choice.

BULLYING AND HARASSMENT CAN LEAD TO FREQUENT ABSENTEEISM, MORE DROP-OUTS, ACADEMIC FAILURE, AND VIOLENCE. BUT YOU CAN FIGHT BACK WITH THE HELP OF PARENTS, STUDENTS, AND YOUR ASSOCIATION.

24

END THE SILENCE. It sounds like a mission from the CIA, but it's actually a message from the NEA: Activate the bystander, says Meredith Monteville, a national trainer in NEA's Bullying and Sexual Assault Prevention and Intervention Programs.

About 85 percent of the kids in your school aren't actively involved in bullying or harassment—they're not the bullies or the victims. "They're the silent audience that stands around and watches, which empowers the bully," Monteville says. "We try to get the bystanders to act, to intervene....Even if they just stand there, near the target, the bully is defused."

25

TURN THE RULES INTO TOOLS. At Delahunty Middle School in western Pennsylvania, the anti-bullying student committee told teachers that they wanted help on the playground. Too often, recess was fun for bullies, but not so much fun for the kids who got picked on, pushed around, or simply left out of the reindeer games.

So together, students and teachers created a set of recess rules: No pushing, shoving, hitting, tripping, teasing, or name-calling. Two-hand touch football is permitted and sharing of equipment is encouraged. Nerf or wiffle balls are okay, but real footballs and baseballs are not. At all times, two staff members will be present, including one who walks around, and both will have walkie-talkies.

It's really made a difference, said Delahunty teacher Bill Brest. "We haven't had the complaints of name-calling or physical contact, and we're seeing more and more kids playing together," he says. "We had one little boy who actually came to tell us that this was the first time he was invited to play recess games." nea

You didn't really think we'd stop at 25, did you?

Keep counting and keep reading at **www.nea.org/neatodayextra/discipline.html** where we've gathered the best of NEA's resources. Check out:

- **VIDEO CLIPS FROM *TEACHER TV*—starring your colleagues as in-control educators dealing with students who talk too much, work too little, and argue all the time.**
- **QUICK TIPS on dealing with clowns, tattletales, and kids who can't sit still.**
- **SAMPLE RULES for elementary, middle and high school students.**
- **A CHECKLIST of classroom disciplinary procedures.**
- **EXCERPTS FROM OUR PROFESSIONAL LIBRARY BOOKS AND PRODUCTS**
- **EXAMPLE OF a behavioral contract.**

- **AND, if that's not enough, look for more guidance from Harry Wong, California author and classroom management expert, who will answer sticky discipline questions sent in by your colleagues.**

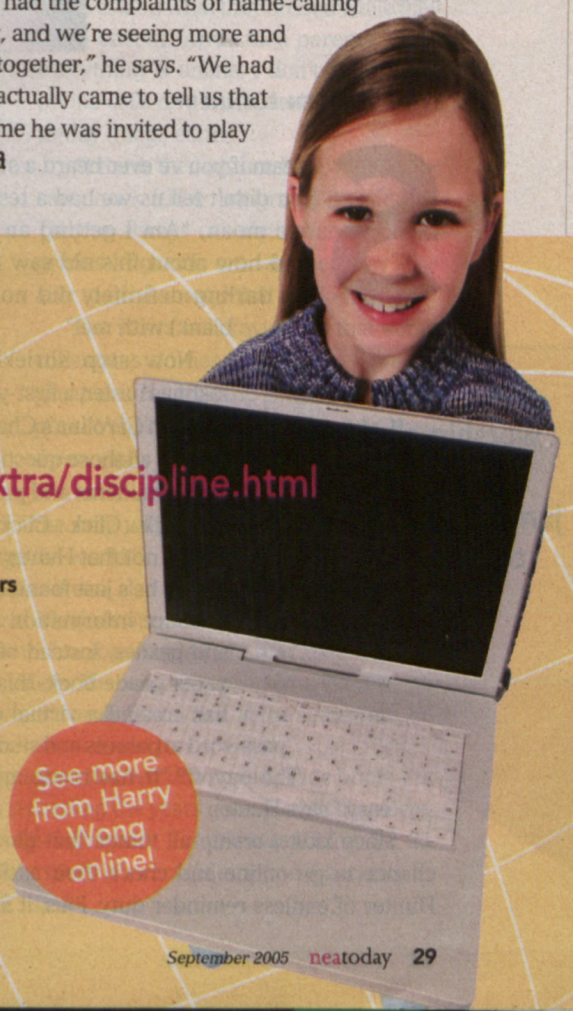
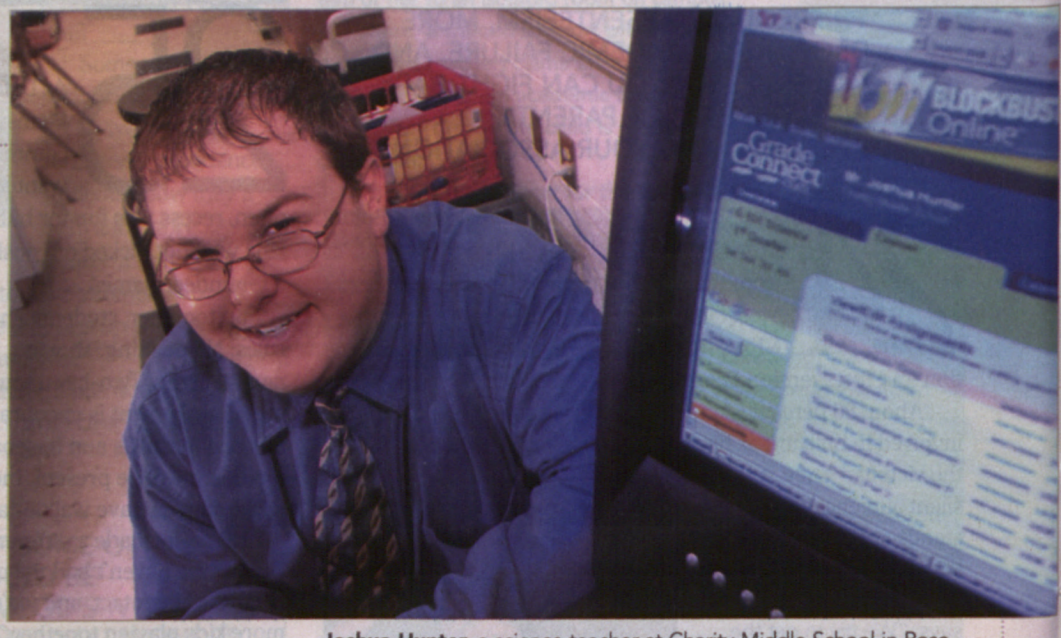


PHOTO: STOCKDISC

E@sy Marks

Some teachers are tossing aside their trusty old grade books for new high-tech versions that do everything but teach.



Joshua Hunter, a science teacher at Charity Middle School in Rose Hill, North Carolina, loves his Web-based management system.

BY MARY ELLEN FLANNERY

Scream if you've ever heard a student sputter, "But you didn't tell us we had a test today!" Or heard one moan, "Am I getting an A in your class?" And how about this old saw from parents, "No, my darling definitely did not share (fill in the blank) with me!"

Now stop shrieking and listen to Joshua Hunter, a first-year science teacher at North Carolina's Charity Middle School, answer all those questions and complaints for his students and parents.

Click... Click... Click.

It's not that Hunter is averse to conversation; he's just found a more efficient way to share information about assignments and grades. Instead of keeping score in a paper grade book, this tech-savvy teacher has created a virtual one—accessible by password to parents and students on the Internet.

The payoff? "It has made my life tremendously easy," says Hunter.

Since kids worship all things that glow, they jump at the chance to go online and check their assignments—relieving Hunter of endless reminder duty. Plus, it improves his contact rate with squirrelly middle-school parents. While they might never set foot into his sixth-grade laboratory, their fingers can do the walking on his Web page.

Since kids worship all things that glow, they jump at the chance to go online and check their assignments...

Log in, click on the calendar feature, then pick a date. "Using the information you have learned about your ecosystem," one day's posting began, "you are going to create your own animal!" Or, check grades and send a quick question, "Mr. Hunter, will there be any opportunities for extra credit this semester?"

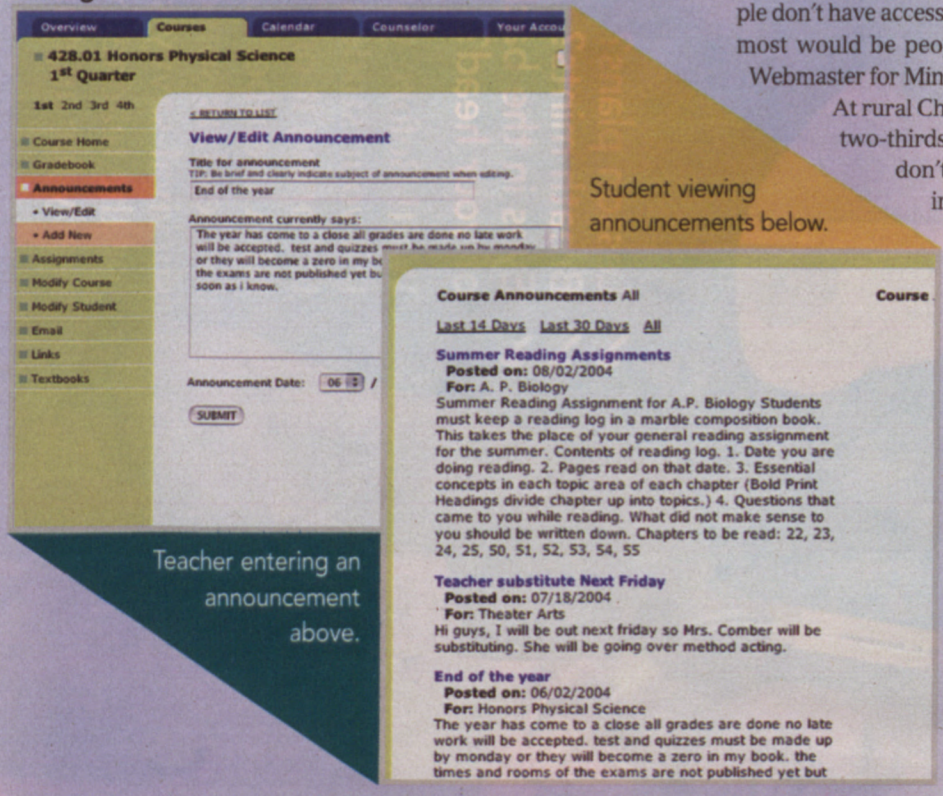
Hunter uses Grade Connect (www.gradeconnect.com), a free Web-based system designed by a Pennsylvania teacher, but there are loads of products offering a range of services. Start with a good electronic grade book—something to track your dozens of quizzes and figure final grades at a flash—but don't look far.

For $72 a year, NEA offers an Advanced Teacher Toolkit (www.neateachertoolkit.com) that provides a standards-based report card, as well as lesson planning and assessment tools. For free, teachers also can use the tool kit to write individualized education programs (IEPs) and check the curriculum standards in their state—both popular options, says NEA staff Rick Geier. "Teachers finally have quality, easy-to-use instructional and classroom tools designed by practicing teachers," he says.

This kind of technology, Geier adds, "is transforming the way teachers do their jobs, making them more efficient and responsive."

PHOTO: STEPHANIE BRUCE

www.gradeconnect.com


Overview
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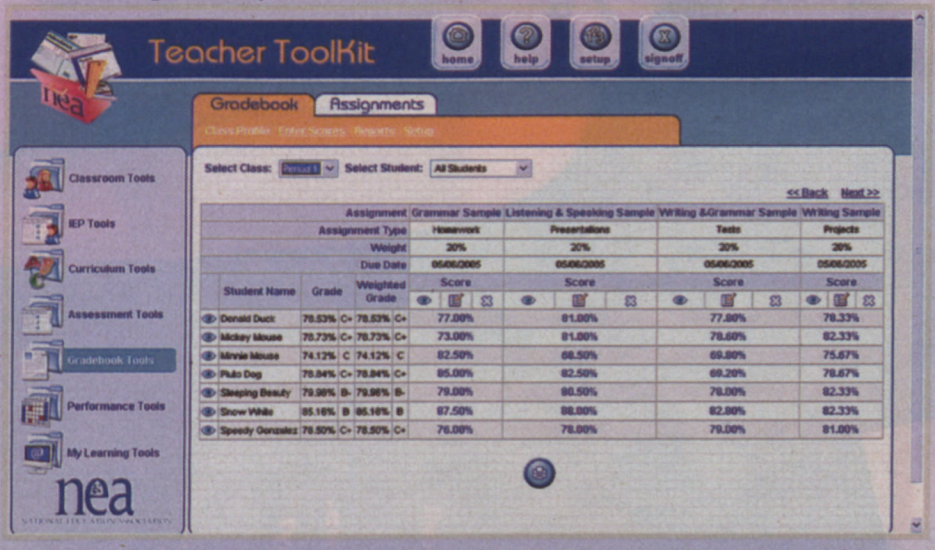
End of the year
Announcement currently says:
Announcement Date:
SUBMIT
Course Announcements All
Course
Last 14 Days Last 30 Days All
Summer Reading Assignments
Posted on: 08/02/2004
For: A. P. Biology
Summer Reading Assignment for A.P. Biology Students must keep a reading log in a marble composition book. This takes the place of your general reading assignment for the summer. Contents of reading log. 1. Date you are doing reading. 2. Pages read on that date. 3. Essential concepts in each topic area of each chapter (Bold Print Headings divide chapter up into topics.) 4. Questions that came to you while reading. What did not make sense to you should be written down. Chapters to be read: 22, 23, 24, 25, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55
Teacher substitute Next Friday
Posted on: 07/18/2004
For: Theater Arts
Hi guys, I will be out next friday so Mrs. Comber will be substituting. She will be going over method acting.
End of the year
Posted on: 06/02/2004
For: Honors Physical Science
The year has come to a close all grades are done no late work will be accepted. test and quizzes must be made up by monday or they will become a zero in my book. the times and rooms of the exams are not published yet but

Student viewing announcements below.

Teacher entering an announcement above.

www.nea.org/marketplace/ttk.html



BEFORE YOU CLICK YES

But there are a few challenges in making online grading or electronic report cards work for you. Just ask Roger Green, an English teacher at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology in Northern Virginia. His school requires the use of grading software—but where, exactly? Green doesn't have his own classroom, and the system doesn't allow home access.

And, teacher access to the online world isn't the only problem: Not every parent has welcomed Bill Gates into their home. Many simply can't afford to—yet these are some of the families who most need direct contact from educators.

"We're trying to be conscious of the fact that some of our people don't have access, and some of the people who might be hurt most would be people with least access," says Larry Tuura, Webmaster for Minnesota's Wayzata School District.

At rural Charity Middle, where Hunter teaches, about two-thirds of students can't pay for lunch, and many don't have computers at home. To the contrary, in Tuura's suburbs, almost every student is racing along the information superhighway—and about half of their families have "gone paperless" and opted for instant grades on the school Web site.

Tuura, also a foreign language high school teacher, can't wait for the day when every teacher and student signs on. How easy does this sound? Post a Spanish quiz on your own Web page, ask the kids to log on from their desks and test their vocabulario, and then sit back while their scores are automatically recorded. Some services also allow for moderated online forums, where discussions can be held in virtual classrooms.

THE POWER OF PAPER

"I don't need convincing," Tuura says. "As a teacher who posts homework online, I rarely get interrupted by students asking what they missed while they were absent. And since parents know everything is online, I don't get a lot of phone calls or e-mails dealing with day-to-day things either.

"I think the kids are happy that they can check [their progress] frequently. They're always calculating end-of-term grades—figuring out whether they'll be able to drive the car that weekend!"

But Tuura acknowledges that some colleagues do need convincing—and a great deal of training and on-call support. Why, they wonder, should they throw out a system that, for all its flaws, works? "Some people have said, 'This is the only way I know how to do things. You're going to change the world on me,'" he says.

At times, Virginia's Green also feels that way—a little bit Luddite in a new world. He does appreciate advancements, and he loves the idea that technology could help him keep track of each student's skill mastery. If a computer program could speak to that need, Green would surely listen. But, at the same time, he worries that his other senses might be deprived.

There's something about the heft of a paper grade book—its rows of inked grades recording the years gone by that comforts.

"Maybe I'm just old-fashioned, I've been teaching for 25 years," Green says, "but there is a certain emotional security in something I can hold." nea

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10. I'm sorry.
9. My mom's going to call you.
8. The printer didn't work.
7. The computer is down.
6. I told you...
5. You wanted it today?
4. No one told me...
3. It's not my job...
2. I forgot...
1. I was going to but...
NO EXCUSE IS ACCEPTABLE!
PHOTO: DANNY PECK

- ☑ Lesson plans?
- ☑ Breath mints?
- ☑ Eyes in the back of your head?

Wait! Before you tell your students to "bring it on," NEA member Laura Schley has some survival-savvy secrets for the teacher who's ready for anything!

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IFS-A105883 Ed. 6/05

DTNT0905

Showing You the Money

NEA launches a national initiative to boost teacher and ESP pay. Now comes your part.

BY DAVE WINANS

Ah, the new school year. New young faces, new solutions to the challenges of your job, and (gulp) new bills to pay back home. It's definitely time to reassess your economic worth. But where to begin? You might start by joining NEA's groundbreaking national campaign to boost educator pay.

The goal: win a $40,000 minimum salary for every teacher and an "appropriate living wage" as starting pay for every education support professional (ESP). "To provide a quality education to kids, our members need to stand up for themselves," stresses NEA President Reg Weaver. "That means advocating for pay to recruit and retain the very best educators available."

Want to get on board? Here are some simple ways.

BUILD ON THE SUCCESS OF YOUR COLLEAGUES.

Some already have negotiated starting teacher pay of $40,000 and beyond, and others are well on the way. By mid-summer, New Jersey Education Association (NJEA) locals had bargained multi-year contracts with teacher minimums of $40,000 or more in more than 58 percent of the state's school districts.

> **"WE CONVINCED OUR DISTRICT that its number one asset is educators. You pay for these people first."**
>
> —LARRY NIELSEN, PRESIDENT, HELENA (MONTANA) EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Yet more inspiration: through a community-focused "living wage" campaign, the 1,090-member Birmingham (Alabama) ESP bargained a higher pay scale last year that, among other things, boosted the starting wage for school nutrition employees from $6.59 to $9.50 an hour. And in Montana, the Helena Education Association (HEA) negotiated its state's highest teacher minimum, $30,000—a one-year jump of $7,000.

REMIND PEOPLE YOU'RE WORTH IT.

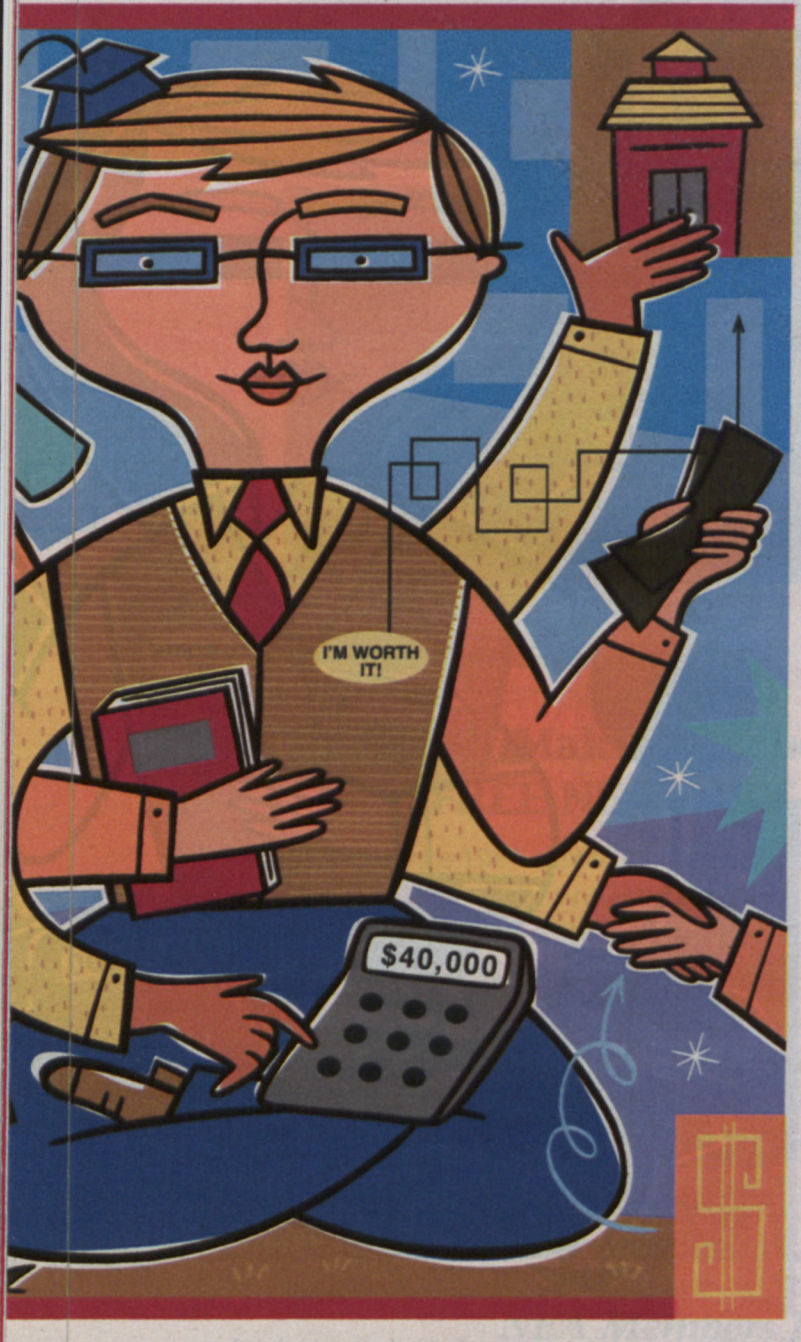
The folks in Helena, Montana, did. "We convinced our district that its number one asset is educators. You pay for these people first," explains HEA President Larry Nielsen. "The research proves that they are the number one factor affecting student achievement."

By educating their district about the complexity of their jobs and how their low salaries compared with those paid elsewhere, school nurses in NEA-St. Louis (Missouri) recently bargained a better pay scale, boosting minimums from $23,431 to $32,306 and enabling the district to fill 10 of 13 nursing vacancies. "If you believe you're invaluable to the district, you've got to maintain your professionalism and make your presence known in the school building," stresses nurse negotiator Susan Davis. "Make

ILLUSTRATION: DEBRA DIXON

other people believe in your value!"

Any teacher or ESP can start this conversation. Before graduating this year from the University of South Dakota, Robin Musch—a new elementary special education teacher in St. Francis, Minnesota—had this to say to fellow college students who scoffed at her career plans: "As a teacher, I touch more lives than any other profession I can think of. I help young people be problem-solvers and I instill hope in them. It's a hard task, but somebody has to do it."



DO YOUR RESEARCH.

Still have doubts? You have the numbers on your side—so dig into the abundant data that can help you win higher pay.

Figure out the cost of living in your region with the help of a credit union, a local university, or an online family budget calculator. Then compare salaries with neighboring districts or other, similar professions.

Last year, researchers at the non-partisan Economic Policy Institute (www.epinet.org) found that between 1996 and 2003 inflation-adjusted teacher weekly wages rose just 0.8 percent—far less than the 11.8 percent growth of weekly wages of other college graduates. And in a spring employer survey, the National Association of Colleges and Employers (www.naceweb.org) uncovered an alarming gap between average starting pay for teaching ($29,733) and that for professions such as accounting ($44,564) and software design/development ($53,729).

TAKE YOUR CASE TO THE COMMUNITY.

The arguments for better pay are all around you—be it the departure of new teachers to higher-paying professions, the fatigue of veteran colleagues working outside jobs to survive, or the ever-growing duties and professional demands generated by state and federal standards.

The Washington Education Association (WEA) has made "professional compensation" for educators a top priority, reports WEA President Charles Hasse, "and we know the general public is squarely on our side; they don't want their sons and daughters entrusted to people making substandard salaries." The very best folks to connect with community supporters, Hasse stresses, are locally respected NEA members, "competent professionals speaking on the need for improved salaries."

> **"WE NEED TO TAKE CARE of ourselves; nobody else can do this for us."**
>
> —DEBBIE BRUHN, PRESIDENT, LUMBERTON TOWNSHIP (NEW JERSEY) EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

STICK YOUR NECK OUT.

Steve Alberghini, a special education paraeducator at North Kingstown (Rhode Island) High School, is proud of his NEA local affiliate's ability to improve ESP pay through "creative" means, such as bargaining paid lunch for paras. But he's still tired of "quarter raises" and low expectations.

"I don't care if the statewide para 'average' is $14 an hour," Alberghini says. "Somebody has to go past the starting gate and say, 'We need more—the median is not enough! Somebody needs to break the ice, take the lead, and demand [a living wage].'"

"We need to take care of ourselves; nobody else can do this for us," agrees Lumberton Township (New Jersey) Education Association President Debbie Bruhn, who has bargained a $40,942 teacher minimum for this new school year. "We deserve a salary equal to any other profession. For the most part, more teachers have more advanced degrees than people in other, higher-paid professions—and we must constantly improve our skills." nea

For much more on educator pay and its impact on the profession, check out next month's *NEA Today*.

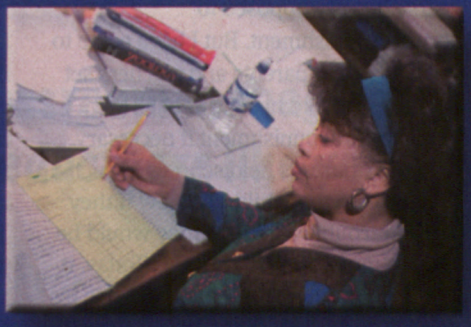
ILLUSTRATION: DEBRA DIXON

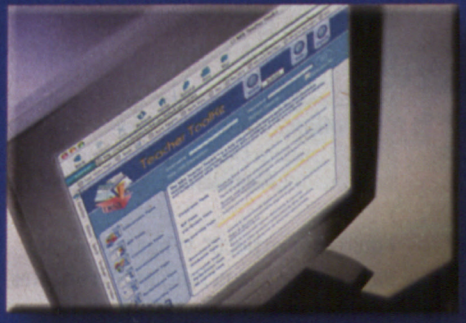
How do you...

...want to spend the last days of summer?

Like this?

or this?





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Great Public Schools for Every Child

Corporal punishment is legal in 22 states. Would you support its use in your school?

[YES]

Defiance, chaos, threats, cursing, assault. All these behaviors have risen from rare to frequent in many schools since the elimination of corporal punishment. I began teaching 29 years ago very opposed to corporal punishment. But I have come to see that caring parents and teachers set limits and should be able to back them with corporal punishment if necessary.

Once, parents held schools in such high esteem that children knew if they were in trouble at school they would be in even more trouble at home. Today, it is more common for a student to use his cell phone on his way to the office to call a parent to "bail him out."

A growing number of parents are so protective that they yell at teachers who dare to discipline their children, complain to administrators and school boards, and even threaten lawsuits. Few teachers and administrators can withstand such bullying. Paddling is legal in Missouri, but no administrator in my district will allow it.

Misbehaving children have come to believe no one can stop them. Each year, when I tell students that state law allows spanking, they are incredulous. Their common taunt has become, "You can't touch me." Detention and suspension have no effect. Students carry these "punishments" as badges of honor in their negative peer group.

In a perfect world, parents would teach their children how to behave at home. Unfortunately, that often doesn't happen. If the nation wants orderly schools and higher test scores, it must allow educators a big toolbox of discipline methods in which corporal punishment continues to be an option. The occasional spanking of a boy or girl for bad behavior provides an immediate, painful consequence that can convince them and their friends to pay attention.

Even the threat of corporal punishment could be the one thing that keeps a boy or girl out of prison.

DAVID MASON teaches eighth-grade U.S. history at Spring Garden Middle School in St. Joseph, Missouri.

[NO]

Corporal punishment is violence against children and has no place in a public school.

Middle school students often feel that a hit here, pull of hair there, stone thrown now and then are perfectly OK. As educators, we should be good role models and not add to the violence.

Corporal punishment is legal in Texas but in my district, we don't use it. So how do we keep unruly students from disrupting classes? Our school has an "In-School Suspension Room." If a student is out of control, an aide takes the student there for a "Time Out." Often, the student reflects and writes about why he or she acted inappropriately.

If that's not enough, we use a discipline plan with step-by-step, increasing consequences for misbehavior. For the most serious cases, we have an Alternative School where the student-teacher ratio is small and the primary focus is anger management and citizenship. There is a tradeoff: Academics take a back seat—although they are still present.

On our campus, one boy started out the sixth grade with a noisy argument in the hall. He quickly progressed to disruptive classroom behavior and, ultimately, membership in a gang. We had to assign him to our Alternative School.

Several months later, he returned. He realized he had missed quite a bit of work. He said he had made very bad choices and was now determined to be a successful student. At his first award night he told me, "I never knew that if I gave of myself and really worked hard, I would receive far more back than I could ever expect!" What a beautiful smile he had, clutching his certificates for most improved student!

Not all students respond so well. But our Alternative School gave him a stronger and longer-lasting boost in the right direction than a paddle could have done.

NOEL ROSENBAUM is a technology teacher at the William D. Slider Middle School in El Paso, Texas.

WHAT'S YOUR OPINION?

Would you support the use of corporal punishment in your school? To vote, visit our Web site at www.nea.org/neatoday and see the results instantly. *[The NEA Representative Assembly, NEA's governing body that comprises thousands of NEA members, has taken a stand against corporal punishment, although NEA membership reflects a range of opinions.]*

Should the school year be longer? The tally on the question in the last *NEA Today*: 36% Yes 64% No

Should students get grade points for effort? If you'd like to take part in this future Debate, send a brief note to Alain Jehlen, **ajehlen@nea.org.**

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The Right Stuff

When Kathleen Lange left a promising job in the medical profession to become a school health care assistant, she knew most people wouldn't call it a "move in the right direction."

LANGE, HOWEVER, RARELY MOVES IN THE DIRECTION PEOPLE EXPECT—an approach toward life that's led her to a job she loves and an award as the 2005 Education Support Professional (ESP) of the Year.

"The job turned out to be a perfect fit," says Lange, "one of my very best blessings. I leave work feeling very good about what I do each day."

As a health care aide at Salt Creek Elementary School in Illinois, Lange provides first aid, administers medications, conducts vision and hearing tests, reviews immunization records, and dispenses daily doses of TLC to the students in her charge. Always looking for ways to improve, the tech-savvy ESP pioneered an electronic system of analyzing student health data that's decreased visits to the health office, increased instruction time, and provided valuable new insight into the connection between student health and classroom performance. The system is so successful, Lange now conducts trainings for other health staff, develops training manuals, and works with the technology department to provide technical assistance and field support.

It's helped to work in a school environment that looks at people first, not their positions, says Lange, the first ESP to become president of her wall-to-wall local and the first to serve as a regional chair. "We all have a role to play and lessons to teach," she says, "whether it's getting kids to school safely on the bus, providing hot meals at lunchtime, or making sure they learn their lessons. There's incredible power to make things happen when teams work together."

—SABRINA HOLCOMB

Helping Hands

From science course to racecourse, Gail Hand's two jobs make her a pretty popular teacher at Streetsboro Middle School.

AS AN INSTRUCTOR IN THE FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCE DEPARTMENT, Hand teaches eager kids how to cook. "They like to cook because they like to eat," says Hand of her enthusiastic students. As co-owner of an Ohio motocross (dirt bike) racing track, Hand is not only well-versed in one of the country's fastest growing amateur sports, she's also in a position to offer those same students jobs.

Hand and her husband Dave, a former professional motorcycle racer, are part owners of the 86-acre Ohio International Raceway in Ravenna. Since Dave's brother is the other owner, the entire family is involved. Both sets of parents help out, the Hands' sons—Michael, 6, and David, 4—compete in Pee Wee Division races, and Dave Hand still competes in amateur national events.

When they need workers to mow the grass, put up flags and banners, help with sign-up, count laps, serve as flaggers, score the races, and give out trophies, guess where the Hands turn? "My students are always asking if we need help," Hand says. "Some enjoy being at the racetrack and some just enjoy having a job and making money. Hiring them gives me the satisfaction of keeping them involved in something positive."

The Hands' track is open from April to October. Races, usually held on Sunday, draw an average of 400 riders and 1,000 spectators. Competitors range from age 4 to 50-plus. "Our oldest rider is 76," Hand says proudly.

Although she's up-to-speed on the procedures, rules, and technicalities of motocross, Hand says there's one bridge she'll never cross—racing. "Every time I get on a bike, I crash," she says. "I just don't have a good sense of balance."

—CAROLYN WHITE

PHOTO TOP: CALVIN KNIGHT (LARGE), JOYCE MCGUINNESS (INSET); BOTTOM: SCOTT SHAW

Starstruck

For sixth-grade science teacher Lucinda Mitchell, the journey from neophyte to space savant has been a celestial experience.

WHEN MITCHELL FIRST discovered she was to teach a unit on space, it dawned on her she knew little more about the subject than her students at Michigan's Ruth Fox Elementary School. That was then. Now, six years later, Mitchell is the proud recipient of the 2004 Space Educator Award from Estes Rocketry, The Space Foundation, and the National Science Teachers Association.

Mitchell's first giant leap toward excellence was applying to NASA's Network of Educator Astronaut Teachers (NEAT) workshop. Once accepted, she and 24 educators from around the country attended an intensive two-week seminar at the Glenn Space Center in Cleveland. During this time Mitchell met distinguished scientists and engineers and participated in experiments making miniature rockets and hot air balloons. Upon completing the program she was officially lunar certified, which grants her access to moon rocks for presentations. "It really is quite a responsibility," says Mitchell. "The rocks must be in my sight at all times. Even if I go to the store, I have to carry them with me."

Constantly searching for programs to further her knowledge and hone her skills, Mitchell is excited about the upcoming year. This summer she'll reunite with her fellow NEAT members and tour the Kennedy Space Center in central Florida. Having completed her master's in space studies from Regis University, Mitchell is exploring the possibility of publishing her senior thesis, a collection of 40 space-related lesson plans. She's also busily preparing fund-raisers to help send a group of ambitious students to the U.S. Space and Rocket Center's Space Camp in Huntsville, Alabama.

"I never imagined all this would happen to me," says Mitchell. "I think sometimes teachers are leery about trying something different, but there is so much out there. You really have to go after it."

—DANIEL MOISE

Keeping the Ball on the Court

To find out why Boy and Betty Toy are hooked on tennis, you have to go back to 1978 and a wooden racquet that couldn't keep up with the fancy new aluminum ones.

BOY'S LOVE OF TENNIS BLOOMED when his son—wielding a brand new aluminum racquet—served and volleyed Boy and his wooden racquet right off the court. Chagrined with defeat, Boy and Betty bought aluminum racquets the very next day—and never looked back.

The Education Minnesota-Retired members became regulars at the tennis club, competing in the 1999 and 2003 Senior Olympics, Although they didn't pick up any medals in tennis, Boy won a silver medal in doubles table tennis for their age group.

For the Toys, however, winning isn't everything. "We have met so many wonderful, kind, considerate people through tennis," says Boy. It's not always competition."

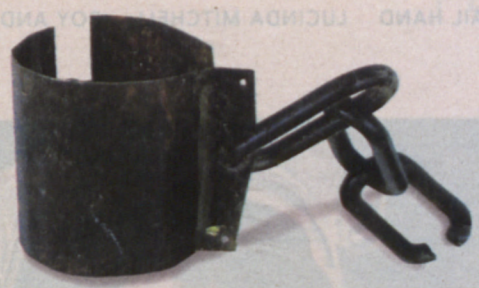
Still, Boy wagers he's now good enough to beat his son even using that old wooden racquet. He won't have the chance to prove it, though—he donated the old racquets to charity years ago so disadvantaged kids could have a chance to try the sport too.

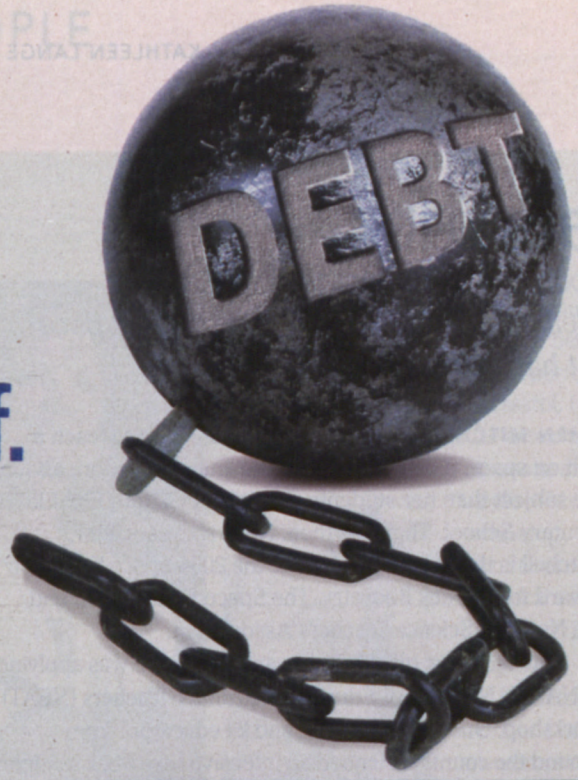
—SARAH RABOVSKY

GOT A TIP?

Do you have an interesting story idea? Contact Sabrina Holcomb, section editor, at **sholcomb@nea.org.**

PHOTO BOTTOM: JANET HOSTETTER





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NEA Personal Loan Estimated Monthly Payment Chart

Loan Amount	Term (in months):					
	24	36	48	60	72	84
$3,000	$140	$96	$75	$62	N/A	N/A
$10,000	$463	$319	$248	$205	$177	N/A
$15,000	$694	$479	$371	$307	$265	$234
$25,000	N/A	$797	$618	$512	$441	$390

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PLNT0905

Revelations and Relief

What's the biggest surprise you've had from a former student?

ANSWER: I ran into a high school student from the wild and mini-skirted days of the late 1960s when I had just started teaching. He asked, "Do you know what I remember the most about your class?" Visions of life's great lessons ran through my head, astounding truths I had most likely imparted to his adolescent mind.

"No, what?" I said.

"You have great legs!" he answered.

SUSAN VAN KIRK, college lecturer and retired high school teacher, Monmouth, Illinois

Read many more answers at: www.nea.org/neatodayextra

ANSWER: I was rushed to the hospital for an emergency gall bladder removal. I was petrified. With a morphine drip in place, I met my anesthesiologist, and looked up through my drugged haze to see one of my all-time favorite students. Grabbing his arm, I said, "Craig!"

"Miss Hoy? From Donegal High School?"

"Yes," I said, "I am so happy you will be my doctor!"

With a sly smile he said, "And I'll bet you are happy that I always liked your class!"

CAROLYN HOY, teacher of gifted children, Lititz, Pennsylvania

Group Punishment

I was out with some teachers and a guidance counselor, and one teacher said she had an uncontrollable class. Everyone was going to be disciplined because most would not behave. The counselor said teachers should find a way to get at only the bad students. But how?

DEBI MIDDLETON, Chesterfield, Virginia

ANSWER: Punishing the entire group leads to total destruction.

Win them over a few at a time. Reward good students.

Also, it is important to identify the leaders of the revolt and stop them. Call their parents. Give detentions.

Punishing all the students will negate whatever help you could get from individual class members, parents, or the administration.

Once the entire class is against you, your only salvation is to try to survive until the end of the year, which surely will come along in a painfully slow manner.

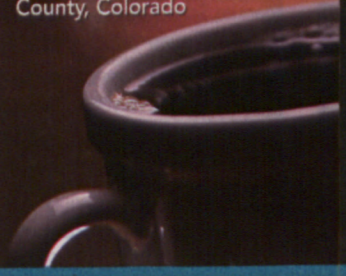
REBECCA MAZZARELLA
history teacher, Miami, Florida

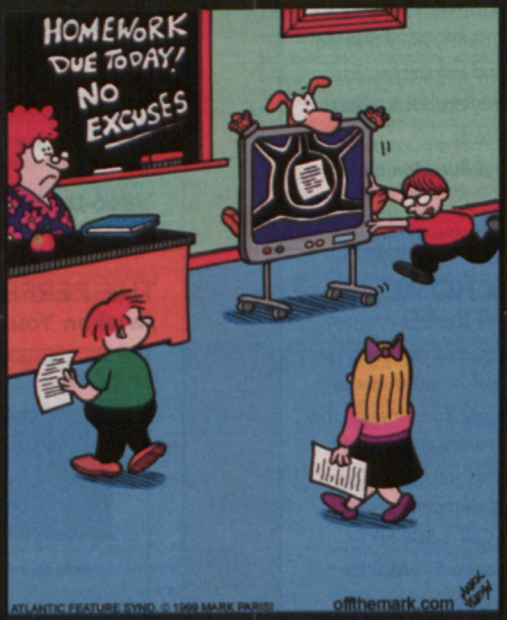
TOP TIP

WELCOME SUBS

I used to be a Student Council sponsor, and one of our favorite projects was to make substitute teachers feel valued. We put together dozens of welcome packages: a thank you note, a paper coffee cup, tea bag, hot cocoa packet, and granola bar. Now that I am a substitute myself, I truly appreciate the special thought.

DONNA KELLEY Jefferson County, Colorado





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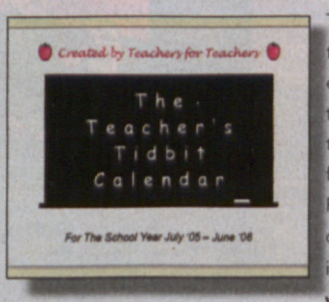

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Democracy in Action

New NEA Resolutions and Resolutions Amended at the 2005 Representative Assembly

This list does not include resolutions adopted with editorial amendments. All NEA resolutions are available online at www.nea.org.

A-13. School Accountability

The National Education Association supports effective and fair school accountability systems. The Association believes that these systems must promote high levels of student achievement that reflect meaningful, high-quality learning and ensure that the best teaching practices are supported and utilized. The Association also believes that the focus of the accountability system must be on the school, not on individual stakeholders, as the unit for evaluation and improvement of student learning. Development and implementation of the accountability system must ensure that the stakeholders at the school, district, state, and national levels share the responsibility for establishing clear goals, adopting high standards for student achievement, establishing multiple measures of student success, and providing adequate and equitable funding and support systems.

The Association further believes that a school accountability system must—

a. Promote educational excellence
b. Ensure the alignment of standards, assessments, and curricula
c. Balance its focus on school context, process, and student performance
d. Set high standards for student learning, levels of support by each stakeholder, and clearly defined goals for the school as a unit
e. Provide for the development and implementation of a valid methodology for use as an assessment tool to determine the required funding necessary to enable all students to achieve educational excellence
f. Provide professional development for all education employees prior to implementation of the system
g. Use multiple assessment tools and sources of data that are meaningful, relevant, valid, and reliable
h. Include necessary accommodations and modifications to maximize the success of all students
i. Include measures to improve school accountability
j. Identify how the school as a unit achieves its goals
k. Identify the quality, quantity, and impact of support provided by each stakeholder
l. Identify and address the internal and external factors that impact student learning and development
m. Provide for the timely dissemination of assessment results to all stakeholders
n. Be applied in a fair and equitable manner
o. Include periodic evaluation and modification of the system
p. Provide for the development of a school improvement plan.

The Association believes that the school improvement process must, as a minimum—

a. Involve all school staff as active partners in the development of the plan
b. Provide the additional funding, resources, and assistance necessary to accomplish the plan
c. Identify the responsibilities of each stakeholder—students, education employees, parents/guardians, community members, government, policymakers, social agencies, and taxpayers—in the implementation of the plan
d. Provide time for planning, implementation, and reassessment
e. Be consistent with education employees' rights and responsibilities as set forth in laws, contracts, policies, and/or local agreement processes. (1971, 2005)

A-15. Federal Financial Support for Education

The National Education Association believes that the federal government has a legitimate and proper concern and responsibility for the quality of public education provided to its citizens.

The federal government should—

a. Ensure equity and adequacy of educational opportunity for all
b. Collect basic data to be used in public schools and to engage in research, development, and consultation activities that support quality state and local education programs
c. Grant supplemental aid to states that are not able to raise adequate funds to provide all students with a high-quality education and to provide funding to support state and local government efforts in pursuit of national interests in public education.

Therefore, federal funding formulas should reflect the most current, accurate accounting of the public school population; measurements of poverty; and the state's ability to raise adequate funds. The Association also believes that funding for federal programs should be substantially increased, not merely redistributed among states or other federal initiatives.

The Association further believes that there should be federal support for education whereby:

a. The federal government assumes a full partnership role with local school districts by providing significant levels of federal funding for elementary and secondary education through a program of general aid and categorical assistance.
b. Federal education funding is clear and identifiable within the federal budget.
c. Federally funded instructional programs have maximum teacher involvement in their development at the federal level and must be implemented at the local level only after the involvement and approval of the recognized bargaining agent or local affiliate.
d. Advisory committees for federally funded programs reflect the ethnic makeup of local communities and maintain a gender balance to ensure accountability and equity. Parents/guardians, students, and educators should be included as members of these committees.
e. The amount of aid is generally predictable for long-range planning and specifically predictable for year-to-year planning.
f. Federal legislation complies with civil rights statutes and is consistent with the constitutional provision respecting the establishment of religion and provides for judicial review as to its constitutionality.
g. Categorical funding is assured in areas such as special education, bilingual/English as a second language, and the economically/educationally disadvantaged.

The Association believes that federal monies budgeted for pre-K through 12 education must be equitably and adequately expended for public education at the pre-K through 12 level. The Association opposes any federal legislation, laws, or regulations that provide funds, goods, or services to sectarian schools. The Association also opposes providing such funds, goods, or services to nonsectarian private schools or nonpublic school students in pre-K through 12 education, unless those funds, goods, or services are used for educational services that are not available in public schools to which students have reasonable access. The Association condemns and deplores federal policies and programs that serve to undermine America's historical commitment to free public education. (1983, 2005)

A-30. Acceptable Charter Schools and Other Nontraditional Public School Options†

The National Education Association supports innovation in public education. The Association believes that acceptable charter schools, which comply with Association criteria, and other nontraditional public school options have the potential to facilitate reforms, such as decentralized and shared decision making, diversity in educational offerings, and the removal of onerous administrative requirements. By developing new and creative methods of teaching and learning that can be replicated in mainstream public schools, these schools may be agents for positive change. The Association also believes that, when concepts such as charter schools and other nontraditional school options are proposed, affected public education employees should be directly involved in the design, implementation, and governance of these programs.

The Association further believes that plans should not negatively impact the regular public school program and must include adequate safeguards covering contract and employment provisions for all employees, voluntary participation, health and safety standards for all students and employees, nondiscrimination and equal educational opportunity, staffing by licensed education professionals, and financial responsibility.

The Association believes that programs must be adequately funded, must comply with all standards for academic assessment applicable to regular public schools, must include start-up resources, must not divert current funds from the regular public school programs, and must contain appropriate procedures for regular periodic assessment and evaluation, as well as adequate attendance and record keeping procedures.

The granting of charters should be consistent with the following principles:

a. Charter schools should serve as a laboratory for field-testing curricular and instructional innovations and/or to provide educational opportunities for students who cannot adequately be served in mainstream public schools.
b. Charter school programs must be qualitatively different from what is available in mainstream public schools and not just an avenue for parental choice.
c. Local school boards should be the only entity that can grant or renew charter applications.
d. The criteria for granting a charter should include a description of clear objectives, missions, and goals. Renewal of a charter should be contingent on the achievement of these objectives, missions, and goals.
e. Appeals of local school board decisions in charter applications should be made to a state education agency but appeals should be heard only on the grounds of arbitrary, capricious, or unreasonable decision making, not on the educational judgment of the local school board.
f. Private, for-profit entities should not be eligible to receive a charter.
g. Charter schools should have a limited right to contract with for-profit entities for services only to the extent that mainstream public schools can do so.
h. Charters should not be granted for the purpose of home schooling, including providing services over the Internet to home schooled students.
i. Charter schools should be nonsectarian in nature. Particular care should be exercised in granting charters to any religious institutions.
j. Private schools should not be able to convert to charter school status. If state law allows such conversions, the chartering agency should ensure that the converted school is significantly different in student body, governance, and education program than its predecessor. This assurance should be especially vigorous in the

†See the NEA Handbook for the Policy Statement on Charter Schools adopted by the 2001 Representative Assembly.

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case of schools with prior religious affiliation.

k. Charters should be granted for a limited period with five years being the norm.
l. Charter schools should be monitored on a continuing basis and the charter should be subject to modification or revocation at any time if the children's or the public's interest is at stake.
m. Charters should not be granted unless the chartering agency is satisfied that adequate startup resources will be available.

Charter schools should be designed and operated in accordance with the following principles:

a. Charter schools may have flexibility within the requirements of law dealing with curriculum, instruction, staffing, budget, internal organization, calendar, and schedule.
b. Charter schools must meet the same requirements as mainstream public schools with regard to licensure/certification and other requirements of teachers and education employees, health and safety, public records and meetings, finance and auditing, student assessment, civil rights, and labor relations.
c. Teachers and education support professionals should be considered public employees.
d. Teachers and education support professionals should have the same constitutional and statutory rights as other public employees.
e. Charter schools should be subject to the same public sector labor relations laws as mainstream public schools and charter school employees should have the same collective bargaining rights under law and local practice as their counterparts in mainstream public schools.
f. Students should not be charged tuition or required to pay a fee to attend a charter school.
g. Students should not be involuntarily assigned to attend a charter school.
h. Charter schools should have some discretion in selecting or rejecting students if they are designed to serve a targeted student population. Students shall not be screened on the basis of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation and/or gender identification, English-language proficiency, family income, athletic ability, special needs, parental involvement in school affairs, intellectual potential, academic achievement, or cost of educating the student. Indirect screening such as denying admission because of the cost of transportation of a student shall not be permitted.
i. Charter schools should meet the needs of at-risk students and those students requiring special education services.
j. Employment in a charter school should be voluntary. Employees in conversion charter schools should be afforded an opportunity to transfer to a comparable position at another mainstream public school.
k. Charter schools should not disproportionately divert resources from mainstream public schools. Charter schools should receive the same amount of money as a comparable mix of students in a mainstream public school. Adequate funds must be available for capital expenditures such as buildings and equipment that do not come from the operating budget of the charter school or the host district. (1993, 2005)

B-2. Independent Reading Skills

The National Education Association believes that it is critical that students become independent readers to succeed in school and life. Reading instruction, with appropriate intervention, especially in the early grades, is essential for learning in all content areas and for achieving high standards. Teachers at all levels should be provided adequate resources, including a fully funded and staffed school library media center, and encouraged to use their expertise to address the diverse needs of students.

The Association also believes that teachers' efforts to value and promote reading should be supported by parents/guardians, school library media specialists, other education employees, and communities. (1998, 2005)

B-3. Middle School and Junior High School Programs

The National Education Association recognizes the academic, personal, and special needs of the early adolescent or middle school learner.

The Association encourages development of a curriculum that establishes realistic academic challenges that include character development, career exploration, and self-awareness that foster positive self-esteem.

The Association also encourages the development of guidance and counseling programs that stimulate parental and community involvement and promote health services. (1976, 2005)

B-4. Color Vision Deficient Students

The National Education Association believes that the needs of all students, including color vision deficient students, must be met. All educational materials that use color coding for referencing information should be accompanied by an alternate method of identifying these items of information such as numbering or labeling the names of each color.

The Association encourages preservice preparation and staff development for education employees that present strategies for working with color vision deficient students. Such training should also address sensitizing instructional staff to the needs of color vision deficient students. (2004, 2005)

B-19. Education of Refugee and Undocumented Children and Children of Undocumented Immigrants

The National Education Association believes that, regardless of the immigration status of students or their parents, every student has the right to a free public education in an environment free from harassment. The Association supports access to higher education for undocumented students and access to financial aid and in-state tuition to state colleges and universities in the state where they reside. The Association also believes that the determination of legal residency status is the responsibility of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, not of educational systems or their employees.

The Association further believes that students who have resided in the United States for at least five years at the time of high school graduation should be granted amnesty by the Immigration and Naturalization Service, granted legal residency status, and allowed to apply for U.S. citizenship, and that legalization not be used as an incentive for or be dependent on military service. (1980, 2005)

B-21. Communication Between Educators and Non-English Speaking Parents, Guardians, and Caregivers

The National Education Association believes that meaningful communication between educators and parents, guardians, and caregivers who lack English language proficiency is necessary to assist parents in their children's development and the family's integration into United States society. Such communication is especially important when communicating educational plans for students with special needs.

The Association also believes that school districts should compile a directory of individuals fluent in specific languages who could be available to translate when necessary.

The Association further believes that educators who fulfill the role of translator beyond the scope of their normal duties should be compensated at their equivalent hourly rate. (2005)

B-28. Educational Programs for Adolescent Parents

The National Education Association believes that school districts must meet the educational needs of adolescent students who are parents or who are about to become parents. Such students should not be discriminated against or denied equal educational opportunities.

The Association recommends programs for these students that include—

a. Flexible scheduling and attendance policies
b. Appropriate guidance in continuing/alternative education programs and productive employment
c. Career development skills
d. Development of self-esteem
e. Promotion of sound health practices regarding nutrition, substance abuse, exercise, family planning, and parenting skills
f. On-site preschool and child care services
g. Free transportation. (1987, 2005)

B-36. Multiple World Language Education

The National Education Association believes that the acquisition of multiple world languages is a vital part of the educational experience and that those who leave school speaking more than one language will be more competitive in the global marketplace. The Association also believes that the cumulative hours of exposure to the target language during a student's educational career is the most important determinant leading to proficiency in a second language. Students should have the opportunity to acquire age-appropriate world language skills from an integrated curriculum throughout the pre-kindergarten – higher education experience.

The Association supports the maintenance of current programs and the further encouragement and development of world language instruction and international studies at all educational levels.

The Association recognizes the need for teacher preparation programs for world language teachers and supports teacher and student exchange programs. (1981, 2005)

B-38. Vocational, Career, and Technical Education

The National Education Association believes that preparation of students for vocational, career, and technical jobs should be the responsibility of secondary and higher education in collaboration with labor and business. Educational programs that assure equal opportunity for occupational development and encourage students to consider nontraditional vocations should be developed for all students at all levels. Vocational, career, and technical education should provide a comprehensive program of lifelong learning for the training, advancement, and promotion of all students.

The Association supports vocational, career, and technical education as a major component of education and advocates that every student have the opportunity to enroll in such classes without restrictions. To be effective, vocational, career, and technical education should be preceded by career awareness and exploration programs. These vocational, career, and technical education courses should be coordinated and integrated with traditionally academic courses. These integrated programs should be combined, when appropriate, with cooperative efforts on the part of educators and industrial and business leaders to provide school-to-work experiences for students. Organized vocational, career, and technical education programs offer a sequence of courses that are directly related to the preparation of individuals in paid or unpaid employment in current and emerging occupations. Such programs shall include competency-based applied learning that contributes to an individual's academic knowledge, higher-order reasoning and problem-solving skills, work attitudes, interpersonal and collaborative skills, general employability skills, and the occupational-specific skills necessary for economic independence as a productive and contributing member of society.

The Association also believes that adequate resources must be provided for educators to maintain, enhance, and expand quality vocational, career, and technical education programs, to procure up-to-date equipment and materials for those programs, and to prepare students for a highly technical work environment. The Association further believes that the involvement of education employees, private sector employment and training program personnel, and the labor and business communities is essential to the development of quality vocational, career, and technical education programs. The Association believes such resources should be substantially increased, not merely redistributed among states or other federal initiatives. (1976, 2005)

A Guide to Children's Literature for Teachers and Parents (K-6)

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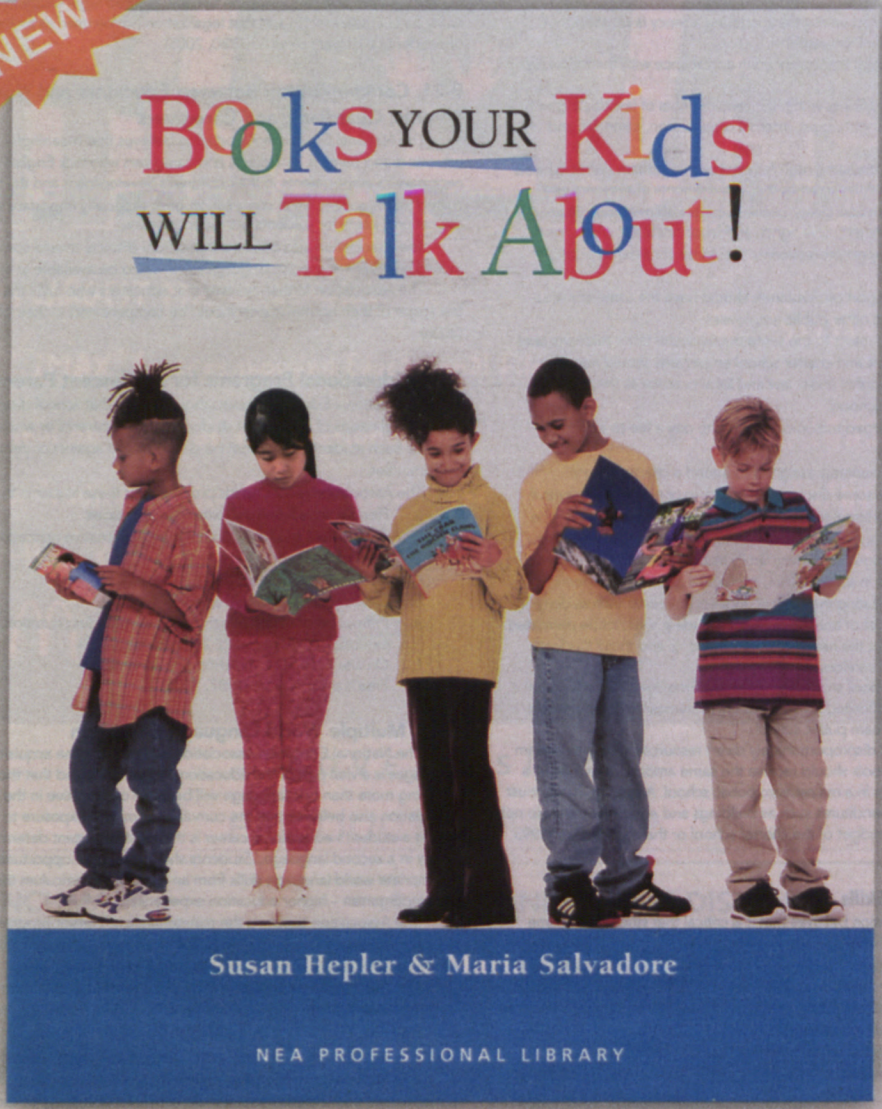

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B-42. Family and Consumer Sciences Education

The National Education Association believes that family and consumer sciences education programs prepare students to manage, with reason and creativity, the challenges across the life span of living and working in a global society.

The Association also believes that Family and Consumer Sciences education programs should—

a. Follow national standards as set forth by the appropriate professional organizations
b. Be developmentally appropriate
c. Be cooperative in nature and culturally sensitive. (2005)

B-45. Science Education

The National Education Association believes that the content in science education must be based on empirical evidence derived from the scientific method. The Association also believes that content and curriculum must be based on the National Science Education Standards of the National Research Council (NRC) and/or the Benchmarks for Science Literacy of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). (2005)

B-49. Democracy and Citizenship Education

The National Education Association believes that education about democracy and the rights and responsibilities of citizens is essential for the survival of American democracy. The cornerstone of such education should be the United States Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

The Association also believes that democratic ideals should be practiced as part of the total education process. The following concepts should be an integral part of the curriculum within public schools and other educational institutions:

a. The dignity and worth of the individual
b. Due process of law
c. Rule of the majority tempered by respect for minority rights
d. Individual responsibility
e. Equal justice under the law
f. Civil liberties as guarantors of individual rights
g. One-person—one-vote
h. Active citizen participation in all aspects of public affairs
i. Freedom of religion, speech, the press, petition, and assembly.

The Association encourages teachers, lawyers, court personnel, and others to work together to develop appropriate materials, including information about the justice system and constitutional issues, in order to teach students to be responsible citizens. (1984, 2005)

B-52. Accurate United States and World Maps

The National Education Association believes that all visual representations using maps of the United States should depict all fifty states and Puerto Rico in their correct geographic location and relative size. The Association also believes that maps of the world should accurately depict national boundaries and names of countries. (1995, 2005)

B-54. Education on Peace and International Understanding

The National Education Association believes that the United States and the other nations of the world should promote peace and international understanding. Educational strategies for teaching peace and justice issues should include the role of individuals, social movements, international and nongovernmental organizations in the peaceful resolution of conflict, and the use of fact finding and reconciliation processes to help with the healing of wounds caused by conflicts.

The Association also believes that educational materials should include activities dealing with peaceful resolution of conflict, the effects of nuclear weaponry and other weapons of mass destruction, strategies for disarmament, methods to achieve peace, historical examples of fact finding and reconciliation processes, and consideration of current situations where such processes could be of value. Such curricular materials should also cover major contributing factors to conflict, such as economic disparity, demographic variables, unequal political power and resource distribution, and the indebtedness of the developing world. (1982, 2005)

B-55. Genocide

The National Education Association deplores any act of genocide, which is the deliberate and systematic eradication of members of any group based on culture, ethnicity, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, and sexual orientation/gender identification. Acts of genocide must be acknowledged and taught in order to provide insight into how such inhumanity develops, prevent its occurrence, and preclude its recurrence. (1993, 2005)

B-60. Standards for Student Learning

The National Education Association believes in high standards that describe clear expectations for what students should know and should be able to achieve. Throughout the implementation of content and performance standards, all students must be provided the instructional opportunities and learning conditions necessary to attain the standards. The Association supports the development and use of a variety of assessments that are appropriate to the standards.

The Association also believes that state and local affiliates must participate in the planning, development, implementation, and refinement of standards, conditions, and assessments to ensure that—

a. Students, parents/guardians, education employees, community members, and governmental officials are involved and share the accountability
b. Education employees are afforded released time and/or compensation in order to have opportunities to work with colleagues on a regular basis throughout the school year on how to teach and assess student proficiency in the standards
c. Full funding and resources are provided
d. Curriculum includes, but is not limited to, required standards. Standards are introduced into the curriculum at a rate that allows education employees opportunities to adapt their practice, work with each other, and pilot the work in a concerted fashion
e. Appropriate attention is given to each student's progress toward attaining the standards and to his or her needs and developmental level
f. Age appropriate placement, when used, includes appropriate interventions and supports designed to enhance skills in order to achieve grade level
g. Professional development is provided for all education employees to help align their practices to the standards
h. Education employees participate in the review and refinement of standards and assessments
i. Achievement gaps are eliminated. (1997, 2005)

B-64. School Library Media Programs

The National Education Association believes every student must have a comprehensive school library media program within his or her educational setting. This program should include a certified/licensed school library media specialist and qualified education support professionals; a variety of print, non-print, and electronic resources to supplement and complement curricular, personal, and leisure needs; relevant technology; and instruction in library research and information skills. The Association believes that school library media programs are negatively impacted if a media specialist does not have a substitute during his or her absence.

The Association encourages increased funding for school library media programs from federal, state, and local governments as well as other sources such as public and/or private partnerships. (1980, 2005)

B-66. Technology in the Educational Process

The National Education Association believes that technology in the educational process improves the learning opportunities for students, improves the quality of instruction, and improves the effectiveness of education employees. Technology can provide opportunities to reduce educational inequities.

The Association supports increased federal, state, and local resources, along with public/private partnerships, to fully fund equipment purchases/leases/upgrades, maintenance, technical support, training, evaluation, and staffing to support the full use of technology in public schools, public colleges, and public universities.

The Association also believes that—

a. Education employees must have access to necessary technology for managing and advancing instruction. Such technology must be compatible with and on at least the same level as technology in general use outside education. Further, education employees should be provided training, encouragement, time, and resources to experiment with and to research applications of technology in order to integrate technology into all curricula as a regular part of the instructional day.
b. Education employees, including representatives of the local affiliate, must be involved in all aspects of technology utilization, including planning, materials selection, implementation, and evaluation. Additional preparation time and ongoing technological support must be granted to teachers using technology to enrich their instruction. Further, classroom teachers, higher education faculty, and library/media specialists must have collaborative planning time.
c. Teacher preparation in instructional technology, including the development of effective materials, and appropriate instructional strategies must be included in college and university programs.
d. Ongoing professional development must be provided for education employees in the use, integration, and applications of technologies to enhance instruction.
e. Students must have access to and instruction in technology and the responsible use of technology. Further, there must be equity in training, funding, and participation for all students.
f. Instructional technology should be used to support instruction and must be directed by a licensed teacher.
g. Instructional technology should be used to improve the learning opportunities for students, the quality of instruction, and/or the effectiveness of education employees, rather than to reduce positions, hours, or compensation.
h. The evaluation of education employees in any technological program should be conducted openly, be tailored to the medium, and meet the requirements of the local collective bargaining agreement or evaluation policy.
i. The impact of technology, telecommunications, and distance education on education employees should be subject to local collective bargaining agreements.
j. Education employees' participation in distance education must be mutually established in employer policies, locally negotiated agreements, and/or other sources that establish the terms and conditions of employment for education employees.
k. Equity and freedom of access to information unimpeded by geographic, economic, social, or cultural constraints is essential.
l. Education employees should own the copyright to materials that they create in the course of their employment. (1981, 2005)

C-6. Dependent Children of Military Personnel

The National Education Association believes that parents serving in the military should have adequate services provided to ensure that their dependent children are cared for and an uninterrupted education is provided in the event of mobilization of the parent(s)/

guardian(s). The Association also believes that counseling should be available for military dependents and their guardians before, during, and after the military personnel's deployment overseas. (1991, 2005)

C-22. School Transportation

The National Education Association believes that free transportation should be provided for all public school students residing beyond a reasonable and safe walking distance from their assigned schools. Buses that transport students, especially preschool-aged students and/or students with disabilities, should be equipped appropriately. The Association also believes that, if necessary for the safety of the students, a paid bus assistant should be provided.

The Association further believes that all school bus personnel who are utilized to transport students should be publicly employed.

The Association believes in safe and orderly transportation of students. Rules, regulations, and procedures must be developed, enforced, and constantly reviewed and revised to ensure it. In addition to an annual bus inspection, the proper agencies should also conduct random bus inspections.

The Association also believes that local school districts should provide students with transportation for all school related activities. The group's sponsors or chaperones should not be the group's bus driver. (1977, 2005)

D-20. Education Employee Evaluation

The National Education Association believes that formal performance-based evaluations must be augmented by formative evaluation components in order to assure the continuing competency of all education employees in their respective fields.

Effective evaluation procedures supported by professional development programs will enable all education employees to keep abreast of developments in their areas of specialization. Such procedures, with sufficient resources, can help ensure job competency, identify deficiencies in performance, and provide options such as counseling, training programs, a remediation plan, and opportunities to observe peers.

If following such an evaluation and after being given sufficient time, training, and opportunity for improvement, a person is then formally reevaluated and incompetency can be documented, dismissal proceedings with guaranteed due process may be instituted. Such proceedings must be implemented by administrators/evaluators who are properly trained and held accountable for appropriate and fair evaluation systems.

The Association also believes that the use of student achievement measures (e.g., grades, standardized test scores, etc.) as criteria in the evaluation process is inappropriate.

The evaluation procedure should be cooperatively developed and maintained in conjunction with representatives selected by the local affiliate and should include—

a. Clear performance expectations that are specific to the job description
b. Regular observation of job performance with advance notice and discussion of evaluation visits and a timely consultation after each visit
c. A written evaluation report to be provided to the person being evaluated
d. Opportunity for a written response prior to the placement of the evaluation in the personnel file
e. An employee improvement plan that will not interfere with any earned pay increase or longevity credit
f. A provision for an alternative evaluator and/or an opportunity for an alternative evaluation report to ensure a fair and unbiased evaluation of the education employee
g. An unbiased appeals process with an evidentiary hearing under oath.

The Association further believes that procedures for evaluation of administrators should include evaluations by education employees who are directly supervised by them.

By participating in an evaluation process, an education employee shall not waive his or her right to due process in any subsequent contractual or legal proceeding. (1969, 2005)

D-22. Evaluation and Promotion in Higher Education

The National Education Association affirms the importance of teaching in institutions of higher education and believes therefore that research and publication should not be the only criteria on which higher education faculty are evaluated and/or promoted.

The Association also believes that its higher education members must be allowed to determine through the collective bargaining process the methods by which they are evaluated and promoted.

The Association further believes that in order to maintain high standards throughout higher education, administrators must undergo individual, periodic, and regular evaluation. Evaluation committees must include peers, faculty, staff, and students in order to provide a balance of perspective and evaluation effectiveness. (1986, 2005)

E-1. Instructional Excellence

The National Education Association believes that to achieve and maintain instructional excellence there must be continual improvement in the education process. The Association also believes that teachers have the primary responsibility for instructional excellence and must have the primary authority to recommend improvements in instruction through a democratic decision-making process. The Association further believes all education employees should support high standards for instructional excellence and contribute to the continual improvement of education. The Association believes that no single program can meet the needs of every student. Mandated programs, such as scripted learning programs and pacing charts, restrict the ability of teachers to make decisions for appropriate, meaningful instruction in their classrooms. The Association recommends that education employees collaborate in the research, development, and field testing of new instructional methods and materials. (1969, 2005)

E-3. Selection and Challenges of Materials and Teaching Techniques

The National Education Association believes that democratic values can best be transmitted in an atmosphere that does not restrain free inquiry and learning. The Association also believes that quality teaching depends on the freedom to select materials and techniques. Teachers and school library media specialists must have the right to select and use materials and techniques without censorship or legislative interference. States, school districts, and educational institutions must include teachers and faculty as full voting members on textbook and curriculum review and adoption committees. Participation must be voluntary and compensated.

The Association deplores prepublishing censorship, book-burning crusades, and attempts to ban books from school library media centers and school curricula. Challenges to the choice of instructional materials and techniques must be orderly and objective, under procedures mutually adopted by professional associations and school governing boards.

Instructional materials and equipment must be provided in sufficient variety and quantity to serve all students. (1969, 2005)

E-10. Academic and Professional Freedom

The National Education Association believes that academic freedom is essential to the teaching profession. Academic freedom includes the rights of teachers and learners to explore and discuss divergent points of view. Controversial issues should be a part of the instructional program when, in the judgment of the professional staff, the issues are appropriate to the curriculum and to the maturity level of the student. A teacher shall not be fired, transferred, or removed from his or her position for refusing to suppress the free expression rights of students.

The Association also believes that professional freedom is essential to the teaching profession. Professional freedom includes the teachers' right to evaluate, criticize, and/or advocate their personal point of view concerning the policies and programs of the schools. Furthermore, teachers must be free to depart from mandated scripted learning programs and pacing charts without prejudice or punishment. Teachers also have the right to assist colleagues when their academic or professional freedoms are violated.

The Association further believes that legislation and regulations that mandate or permit the teaching of religious doctrines and/or groups that promote antipublic education agendas violate both student and teacher rights. The Association urges its affiliates to seek repeal of these mandates where they exist. (1969, 2005)

F-11. Benefits

The National Education Association believes that benefit structures should be subject to collective bargaining or, in nonbargaining jurisdictions, incorporated into legislation, employer policy, and/or other sources that establish the terms and conditions of employment. The Association also believes that all education employees should be eligible for benefits that include but are not limited to—

a. Comprehensive insurance programs
    1. Health
    2. Dental
    3. Vision
    4. Hearing
    5. Life
    6. Legal
    7. Workers' compensation
    8. Long-term physical and mental disability
    9. Prescription drug
b. Paid leaves
    1. Sick leave with unlimited accumulation
    2. Personal leave with unlimited accumulation
    3. Bereavement leave
    4. Parental leave, including adoption
    5. Dependent care leave
    6. Sabbatical leave
    7. Professional leave
    8. Association leave
    9. Religious leave
c. Additional remuneration
    1. Severance pay
    2. Tuition reimbursement
    3. Retirement compensation
    4. Unemployment compensation
    5. Benefit extension for laid-off employees
d. Personal assistance
    1. Personal assault protection, and in the event of assault, counseling services and leave that is not subject to sick or personal leave
    2. Employee assistance program
    3. Reimbursement for damages to or loss of personal property at work site
    4. Child care center
    5. An opportunity to participate in a cafeteria-type plan or plan authorized by Section 125 of the U.S. Federal Tax Code. The Association further believes that education employees and their spouses, domestic partners, and/or dependents should have equal access to all benefits applicable to them. The Association believes that comprehensive insurance programs should be provided for education employees on official leave of absence or parental leave.

The Association also believes that provisions should be made for retirees, their spouses, domestic partners, and/or dependents at their option to continue in the comprehensive health, dental, prescription drug, hearing, and vision programs.

The Association further believes that, if school districts consolidate or separate,

education employees should not lose their tenure or have their salary, benefits, or seniority reduced. (1969, 2005)

F-17. Mandated Training/Retraining

The National Education Association believes that when a federal, state, or district mandate requires an education employee to meet new standards of employability and/or to be retrained, it is the responsibility of the mandating agency to provide released time for training, to compensate the employee at the employee's hourly rate of pay, and to provide for the cost of tuition, textbooks, and travel. (1988, 2005)

F-35. Protection of Education Employees from Harassment Because of a Disability

The National Education Association believes that education employees should be protected from harassment because of a visible/invisible disability. The Association encourages its affiliates to work with school districts and institutions of higher learning to—

a. Establish strong policies that ensure compliance with all provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act and provide all necessary accommodation for full participation in all employment responsibilities
b. Develop educational programs to help individuals recognize, understand, prevent, and combat harassment because of a disability
c. Develop and publicize a grievance procedure that encourages the reporting of incidents of harassment because of a disability, resolves complaints promptly, and protects the rights of all parties. (2005)

F-44. Color Vision Deficient Employees

The National Education Association believes that the needs of all employees, including color vision deficient employees, must be met. All educational materials that use color coding for referencing information should be accompanied by an alternate method of identifying these items of information such as numbering or labeling the names of each color. (2004, 2005)

F-53. Substitute Teachers

The National Education Association believes in the importance of employing professional educators to fulfill the critical role of substitute teachers. The Association also believes that substitute teachers perform a vital function in the maintenance and continuity of daily education.

In order to achieve and maintain the highest standards of student learning and professional practice, and to ensure quality instruction in every classroom every day, the Association further believes that substitute teachers must—

a. Meet the same standards as other licensed teachers within the state
b. Receive professional compensation and benefits
c. Receive continuous professional development
d. Be provided with materials and information appropriate to the position in which they are substituting
e. Be entitled to and supported by state and national affiliates in collective bargaining.

The Association condemns the practice of assigning substitute teachers to regular positions for an extended duration of time. Positions created by extended absence should be filled by available licensed teachers who are eligible to be placed on contractual status by the school district.

The Association opposes the practice of replacing absent teachers by dispersing students to other classrooms. The Association also opposes the use of individuals such as education support professionals, part-time employees, or employees hired through private agencies to cover classes. The Association further opposes requiring teachers to substitute during their preparation time, or in place of their regular teaching assignment.

The Association believes that school districts must provide full compensation for licensed teachers who substitute for personnel on extended leave. (1975, 2005)

F-55. Education Employees and Active Duty Service

The National Education Association believes that an education employee whose career is interrupted by a call to active duty service by the National Guard or the reserves should be guaranteed reemployment and all benefits that would accrue if the employee had continued in a position with the school system.

The Association also believes that the federal government, upon calling an educator to active duty, should supplement the service person's compensation so his/her family does not experience a loss of revenue or benefits. (1975, 2005)

F-60. Social Security

The National Education Association believes that Social Security should be available to eligible education employees where desired, but should not be mandated. Contracts with Social Security should provide for supplementary plans rather than integrated or coordinated plans.

The Association also believes Social Security benefits should be guaranteed at no less than the current level. The benefits should continue to guarantee inflation-adjusted retirement income as well as continue to provide guaranteed inflation-adjusted survivor benefits for the families of deceased workers and disabled workers and their families.

The Association further believes that Social Security retirement and survivor benefits should be based upon the Social Security program and Social Security taxes. The Association supports the goal of comprehensive health insurance for retirees.

The Association also supports the reform of Social Security laws to eliminate discriminatory offset provisions and discrimination based on sex, marital status, or time of retirement and to reduce the retirement age. The Association further supports reforms to improve the financial security and stability of the Social Security system without the privatization of the system. No benefit promised or no benefit for which money has been collected should be withdrawn without adequate replacement. (1977, 2005)

H-3. The Right To Vote

The National Education Association believes that the principle of one-person—one-vote must apply at all levels of government, including the election of the President of the United States.

The Association recognizes the right to vote as a constitutional right guaranteed to all eligible citizens. The Association supports the continued maintenance of the provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

The Association also supports voting and absentee provisions that are accessible, simplified, accurate, reliable, and verifiable for all elections and further supports election administrations that provide for open, fair, secure, and publicly verifiable ballot counting.

The Association opposes all actions that encourage or result in voter disenfranchisement. The Association supports voter education programs and uniform registration requirements without restrictive residency provisions. (1971, 2005)

I-3. International Criminal Court

The National Education Association believes that the International Criminal Court is critically important as an instrument to help end the impunity of human rights violators, provide for the rule of law, and hold accountable those who commit the gravest human rights crimes, including genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes.

The Association also believes that the United States should ratify the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and recognize and support its authority and jurisdiction. (2005)

I-8. Global Environmental Restoration

The National Education Association believes that when pollution occurs the responsible entities must be accountable for an expeditious, complete cleanup and restoration of the environment and its ecological systems. In addition, the Association supports international efforts to reduce the levels of toxic metals and chemicals in the food chain. (1990, 2005)

I-10. Human Rights

The National Education Association believes that the governments of all nations must respect and protect the basic human and civil rights of every individual, including equal access to education as embodied in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Association condemns any action that limits or prohibits the free and responsible exercise of these rights and believes that all education employees must lead in the effort to prevent any encroachment on basic human and civil rights.

The Association also believes that the U.S. government should withhold all forms of military aid to governments that violate these rights.

The Association further believes that violence is abhorrent. The Association also condemns violence, as well as the tolerance of violence, and believes that all nations must pass and enforce measures to curtail and prevent actions and practices that inflict pain, suffering, mutilation, or death, and offer asylum to those threatened by such actions.

The Association expresses concern that the utilization of trade sanctions on food and medical supplies by any nation of the world to achieve political objectives fails to adequately consider the possible humanitarian impact of those policies on the civilian populations of the affected nations, particularly the young, the elderly, and the poor.

The Association deplores the holding of hostages, all forms of torture, and the taking of human life in the name of making a political statement. The Association believes that it is the responsibility of all governments to discourage such actions by individuals or groups of individuals. The Association supports an international judicial system that would hold accountable those who violate human rights.

The Association calls upon all nations to release all education employees and students who are being held without charge and to refrain from the use of coercion and arbitrary detention to punish the people of a specific area of their territories.

The Association further condemns the practice of capital punishment in nations without judicial safeguards such as the presumption of innocence and/or the right to counsel.

The Association also expresses concern that the practice of capital punishment in the United States impacts individuals disproportionately on the basis of social class, race, ethnicity, and gender. The Association supports ongoing efforts to review the practice of capital punishment for inequities based on these and other factors.

The Association opposes any local, state, or federal law; Executive Order; and/or amendment to the U.S. Constitution that curtails or infringes on basic human rights. (1977, 2005)

I-24. Sexual Assault

The National Education Association believes that all members of society should be protected from becoming victims of sexual assault. The Association also believes that it is a violation of the victims' right to privacy to release the names of the victims or to have their past sexual history admitted as evidence in assault cases. The Association supports fair and equitable treatment by health, hospital, and law enforcement agencies for sexual assault victims. The Association further believes that access to necessary services/programs must be made available to victims and their families. These services must be funded by appropriate government agencies.

The Association believes that states should develop a systematic process for gathering evidence when such assaults occur and supports the use of DNA testing as a means to identify perpetrators of sexual assault. The Association also believes in the importance of counseling and rehabilitation for the assailant, and the protection of privacy and due process rights for both the victim and the alleged assailant. (1981, 2005)

sept'05

resources

52 **Grants & Awards** Help your library purchase books with new 5k grants.
55 **Take Note** NEA HIN offers funding for indoor air quality symposium and pre-symposium.
57 **Diversity Calendar** Worldwide literacy needs and issues take center stage this month.
59 **In Print** Free verse poetry expresses the powerful emotions experienced by children.
59 **Heads Up from NEA Member Benefits** Find a treasure chest of consumer and personal finance information online.
61 **On TV** September features Hemingway, Castro, the U.S. Constitution, and Hispanics in America.
61 **NEA's Read Across America** 2006 RAA Resource Kits ship this month. Register online to get your copy.
62 **On the Web** Keeping youngsters safe on the Internet and helping teens say no to drugs.
62 **Books by NEA Members** A mystery book for beginning readers.

Last Chance for The NEA Foundation's September Grants

There's still a little time left before The NEA Foundation's September 15 grant review date. All proposals for **Innovation Grants** and **Learning & Leadership Grants** received by **September 15** will be reviewed, with notification by February 15, 2006.

ThinkBIG!
THE NEA FOUNDATION

Applications for these grants are accepted on an ongoing, year-round basis, so it's never too late to apply. Proposals received after September 15 will be considered in the next review cycle. Grants fund activities for 12 months from the award date.

Innovation Grants and Learning & Leadership Grants are funded in part by Staples Recycle for Education. Since July 2003, Recycle for Education has helped raise more than $2.5 million for public education!

NEA members just like you have applied for and received over 1,500 grants nationwide over the years in all subjects, including the arts, literacy, science, and technology. Read about their funded projects on the foundation's Web site, and then submit your own idea.

All members who are practicing K–12 teachers, education support professionals, and higher education faculty and staff at public colleges and universities are encouraged to apply. Grant amounts are either $2,000 or $5,000.

Applying for a grant is easy, so why wait? Visit www.neafoundation.org today for more information, including guidelines and a downloadable application. Or call 202-822-7840.

GRANTS FOR NEA STUDENT CHAPTERS

Building a strong presence on campus is one of the biggest challenges that NEA Student Program chapters face. NEA provides financial assistance in the form of SOAR (Student Organizing and Assistance Resources) grants to encourage efforts to recruit new members or organize a student chapter.

Chapters may apply for funding to recruit in the following areas:

- urban institutions
- minority populations and historically minority campuses
- community colleges
- high school future teacher programs.

Priority is given to student locals working with UniServ units. For more information and an online application, go to www.nea.org/student-program/programs/soar.html.

READ ACROSS AMERICA LIBRARY BOOKS AWARDS

The NEA Foundation announces a new award to help public schools serving economically disadvantaged students purchase books for school libraries. The foundation makes these $5,000 awards to practicing preK–12 teachers and education support professionals who are NEA members on behalf of NEA, with support from Warner Brothers, Inc. There are two deadlines to submit an application: **September 15, 2005,** and **February 1, 2006.** For more information and an application, visit www.neafoundation.org. Applications will be accepted only as e-mail attachments.

NEA URBAN GRANTS

NEA's Urban Grants Program supports local affiliates in the development of education reform leadership programs for PreK–12/Graduate School

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faculty and education support professionals. Each year NEA awards 25 Urban Grants in the amount of $5,000 each to NEA local affiliates to support them with these programs.

The NEA Constituent Relations unit administers the program and looks for proposals that contribute to restoring public confidence in public education by reflecting some aspect of NEA's Strategic Priorities.

NEA local affiliates of 500 members or more who are listed with the NEA membership office or the largest local NEA affiliate of any state regardless of membership number are eligible to apply. Applicants must submit a proposal postmarked by **September 30** to NEA Constituent Relations, 1201 16th Street N.W., Washington, DC 20036. For information on applying, selection criteria, and the review process, go to www.nea.org/teachers/urbangrants.html.

Decisions by the Evaluation Committee are final. Questions should be directed to NEA Constituent Relations/NCUEA at 202-822-7155 or via e-mail at urbaned@nea.org.

CLASSROOM PROJECT GRANTS

Kids In Need Teacher Grants provide K–12 educators with funding to help provide innovative learning opportunities for students. Provided by the SHOPA Kids In Need Foundation, the grant awards range from $100 to $500 each and are used to finance creative classroom projects. Typically, 170–200 grants are awarded each year.

The Teacher Grant applications are judged according to a rubric that emphasizes innovativeness and merit, clarity of objectives, replication feasibility, suitability of evaluation methods, and cost effectiveness. Members of the Foundation's Teacher Grants Committee complete the final round of evaluation of the grant applications in late October. All certified K–12 teachers in the United States are eligible to apply.

To obtain an application, educators can either stop by participating retail sponsors and designated education credit unions or go online to www.shopa.org/shopa_foundation/teacher_programs.php.

The application deadline is **September 30, 2005.** For more information, contact SHOPA Kids In Need Foundation, 3131 Elbee Rd., Dayton, OH 45439; 800-854-7467; info@shopa.org.

FUNDING FOR SEEDS

The Lorrie Otto Seeds for Education Grant Program gives small monetary grants to schools, nature centers, or other non-profit educational organizations to establish outdoor learning centers. Projects must emphasize involvement of students and volunteers and increase the educational value

of the site. Creativity in design is encouraged, but the project must show complete and thoughtful planning.

Using and teaching about native plants and the native plant community is mandatory, and plants must be appropriate to the local ecoregion and site conditions. Funds are only for the purchase of native plants and seed. Grant applications are due **November 15, 2005.**

For more, visit www.for-wild.org/seedmony.htm.

SIEMENS WESTINGHOUSE COMPETITION

The Siemens Westinghouse Competition in Math, Science & Technology allows students to achieve national recognition for science research projects that they complete in high school.

Students may submit research reports either individually or in teams of two or three members. Students whose projects are selected for further competition are invited to give an oral and poster presentation at one of six regional events. At each regional competition an individual and a team are selected as Regional Winners and receive scholarships. Regional winners then advance to the National Competition in New York City.

The top individual and team winners at the national level receive additional scholarships of $100,000. Runners-up receive scholarships ranging from $10,000 to $50,000. This year's deadline is **October 3, 2005.** For more information, go to www.siemens-foundation.org/competition.

Turning Green into Gold

If you know an educator who has a particularly outstanding approach to environmental education, consider nominating him or her for the International Paper Environmental Award.

Given each year by the Conservation Fund and International Paper, and paid for by a grant from the International Paper Company Foundation, this $10,000 grant applauds elementary or secondary school educators or university faculty or staff who have completed a project that teaches students about environmental issues and the link between environmental protection and economic growth. Projects must also exemplify a candidate's leadership abilities and inspire others to achieve.

The 2005 recipient of the International Paper Environmental Award was NEA member Mike Town, a high school teacher in Redmond, Washington. Redmond has orchestrated a slew of projects in the field of environmental science to encourage his students to become as passionate about the subject as he is. He started an AP environmental science class, created an organic vegetable garden, and received a grant last spring to have solar panels installed at his school. Solar panels make electricity from the Sun without pollution.

Town has no plans to slow down any time soon. He's working with another teacher at his school to build a local environmental education center.

"It's a proposed waste water treatment center. If it goes through it will educate students on environmental issues ranging from salmon to waste water to alternative energy and forestry," said Town, who received his award at a ceremony in Washington, D.C., in June.

Entries for the 2006 award are due next spring. Candidates must be nominated, and those nominating must complete four essay questions about their candidate's work and may send any other supporting materials. For more, go to www.conservationfund.org/?article=2331 this winter.

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Take Note

Funding for IAQ Training

Through a 2005 NEA Representative Assembly new business item (#9) and a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the NEA Health Information Network (NEA HIN) will provide funding to send up to 18 teams of NEA members and UniServ staff to the sixth annual EPA Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) Tools for Schools National Symposium and third annual NEA HIN Pre-Symposium training. This year the IAQ Tools for Schools Symposium and Pre-Symposium training will be held **January 11–14** in Washington, D.C.

Each year teachers, education support professionals, UniServ staff, school board officials, administrators, and others attend the conference to discuss improving IAQ in our nation's schools. The conference centers around EPA's IAQ Tools for Schools program—a nationwide initiative that helps school employees assess, resolve, and prevent IAQ problems and reduce exposure to asthma triggers in schools. Innovative workshops will be offered on conducting school walkthroughs, pest control, radon, material selection, and more. Building on last year's success, NEA HIN, a co-sponsor of the Symposium, will once again conduct a Pre-Symposium IAQ training to address IAQ issues from the union perspective.

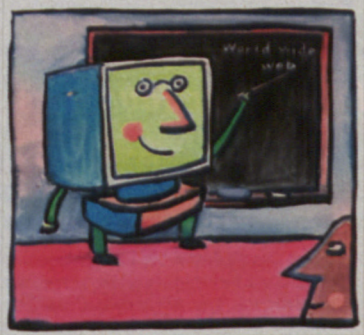
Interested? Applications are due by **Monday, September 26**. For more information and to find out how to apply, visit www.neahin.org.

Free Educator's Guide

Check out the free offerings from Walden Media, the film studio that brought you *Holes* and *Because of Winn-Dixie*. Educators can download a free educator's guide to *Because of Winn-Dixie*, available now on DVD, at www.walden.com. You can also enter for a chance to win two free tickets to the world premiere of *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* this December in London, England. Register at www.walden.com to learn more about Walden Media's upcoming film adaptations of young adult books.

Teaching Media Literacy

Students are bombarded by thousands of images and messages every day. Find out how you can help them learn to "read and write" this new media and prepare for the global media culture of the 21st century. Visit the Center for Media Literacy Web site at www.medialit.org/ to find background information and teaching materials on media literacy, including the following resources:



- Project SMARTArt—A case study and a "how-to" program for teaching media literacy skills to K–5 students, with replicable structure, tools, and lesson plans.
- Five Key Questions That Can Change the World—An online classroom activity guide with 25 lesson plans for K–12 media literacy.
- *Media&Values*—More than 350 articles online from this magazine.
- Center for Media Literacy's MediaLitKit—Materials for free and for sale, in English and in Spanish.

Shop Smart for Back to School

As you hit the stores for your back-to-school shopping this year, take note of what some of your local retailers are doing to support educators and public education:

STAPLES—As part of the Recycle for Education program, Staples donates $1 to the NEA Foundation and various state education association affiliates' foundations for every printer cartridge turned in to its stores for recycling. In addition, Staples has a school site Recycle for Education program where educators can sign up their school at www.StaplesRecycleforEd.com to receive $1 for each eligible ink or toner cartridge they collect for recycling. Staples also offers Teacher Rewards, a program that gives 10 percent back to educators for shopping at Staples. The program provides savings events throughout the year, free delivery on catalog and online orders, and special savings at Staples copy and print centers. Educators can enroll for free at any Staples store or online at **www.staplesrewardscenter.com**.

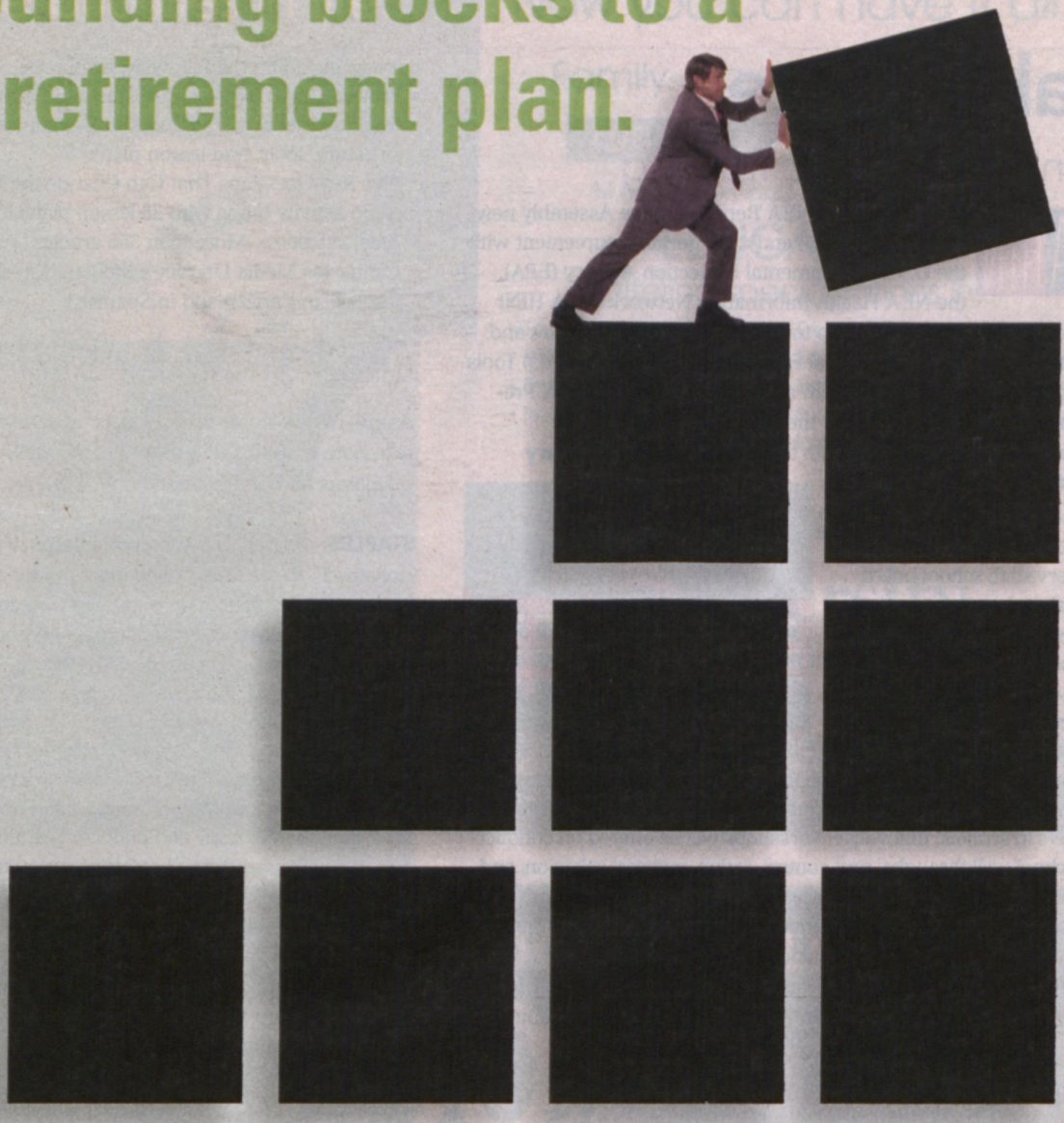
TARGET—The Take Charge of Education School Fundraising program is part of Target's ongoing support of education. Guests designate the school of their choice, and every time they use their Target Red Card at Target, 1 percent of their purchase goes to that school. One-half percent of all Target Visa purchases made elsewhere also qualify. Target will be awarding "Double Points" to all designated TCOE schools when guests use their Target Red Card at Target this September. Throughout the year, teachers can find special product offers, sweepstakes, and various teacher/education GiftCards at **www.target.com/teachers**. Finally, Target, in partnership with the Tiger Woods Foundation, offers a free youth-character development curriculum for ages 8 to 17 to educators and after-school providers around the country.

DOLLAR GENERAL STORES—Since 1993, the Dollar General Literacy Foundation has increased the functional literacy of adults by providing grants to non-profit organizations dedicated to the advancement of literacy. Eligible organizations within the Dollar General market area must be committed to increasing the functional literacy of adults or families and provide direct literacy services within their community. To place your name on the RFP mailing list for future RFPs, send your organization's name, contact name, and mailing address to The Dollar General Literacy Foundation, P.O. Box 1064, Goodlettsville, TN 37072-1064.

COSTCO—Join Costco and enjoy low warehouse prices on thousands of quality products for your classroom or home, including school supplies, educational software, snack items, office supplies and furniture, toys, books, videos, and more. For more information, visit **costco.com** or call 1-800-774-2678.

ILLUSTRATIONS: GETTYIMAGES

The building blocks to a solid retirement plan.



NEA Valuebuilder Program

Building a solid retirement plan takes knowledge and expertise.
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You should consider the investment objectives, risks, and charges and expenses of the mutual funds and variable annuities available under the NEA Valuebuilder Program carefully before investing. You may obtain a prospectus that contains this and other information about the mutual funds and variable annuities by calling our customer service center at 1-800-888-2461. You should read the prospectus carefully before investing. Investing in variable annuities and mutual funds involves risk and there is no guarantee of investment results.

Variable annuities available through the NEA Valuebuilder Program are distributed by SDI and issued by Security Benefit Life Insurance Company (Form V6029). The NEA Valuebuilder Mutual Fund TSA, a Custodial Account under 403(b)(7) of the Internal Revenue Code, and NEA Valuebuilder Mutual Fund 457, a Trust Account under 457(g) of the Internal Revenue Code, make available various mutual funds for investment. NEA Valuebuilder is a registered trademark of MBC. SDI makes retirement plan products available to NEA members pursuant to an agreement with MBC and certain affiliates. SDI pays an annual fee for services rendered under the agreement. MBC is not a registered broker-dealer, and all securities brokerage services are performed exclusively by your financial counselor's broker-dealer and not by MBC. Variable annuities are long-term investments suitable for retirement investing. VBNT0905

Build a Home of Your Own

Building Homes of Our Own, a teaching tool on CD-ROM for middle and high school classrooms, presents the home building process from site selection to final sale. Students collect information, solve problems, and make choices as they build a 3-D home against a budget, review credit applications, and sell to the buyer of their choice. The program is part of the National Association of Home Builders' educational outreach initiative, in partnership with the National Housing Endowment, Chicago Regional Council of Carpenters, and Freddie Mac.

The CD-ROM is free to educators serving schools with enrollments of 100 students or more. The new version lets students save more games and access their work from any computer operating on a server network. To request a copy, visit www.homesofourown.org/.

Promoting Science Literacy

Developed by Congressman Rubén Hinojosa and University of Texas-Pan American, **Hispanic Engineering, Science and Technology Week** (HESTEC) is a year-round leadership program that emphasizes the importance of science literacy to preK–16 students and educators. This year's event will take place **September 26–October 1** at the University of Texas in Edinburg and will feature professional development workshops, presentations by world class speakers, competitions, and hands-on activities. During HESTEC, participants will interact with engineers and scientists during events such as Educator Day, Latinas in Science, and Community Day. For more, go to www.hestec.org.

Celebrate National Multicultural Diversity Day

For more than a decade, educators around the country have been celebrating National Multicultural Diversity Day (NMDD) in their schools and communities on the third Monday in October. Originally created by Cleorah Scruggs, a fourth-grade teacher in Flint, Michigan, the day was adopted as a national event by the 1993 NEA Representative Assembly to "increase awareness of the tremendous need to celebrate our diversity collectively."

This year, you can get involved too. Just be creative. Start by sharing cultural information with your class about yourself, then introduce students to multicultural issues and possible solutions by inviting a local expert to talk on diversity. You can also have students sing songs that celebrate diversity and ask them to bring in items or food representative of their ethnic heritage to share with classmates.

To help educators share ways to celebrate diversity both on National Multicultural Diversity Day (October 17) and throughout the year, NEA sponsors an electronic bulletin board on www.nea.org. Go to the Members & Educators section of nea.org, select "NEA Voices" on the left, and click on the discussion board box to the right.

DIVERSITY CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER

SEPTEMBER 5—LABOR DAY
Signed into legislation more than 100 years ago, Labor Day honors American unions and workers whose achievements are vital to our strength and prosperity. For more, visit www.dol.gov/opa/aboutdol/laborday.htm.

SEPTEMBER 8—INTERNATIONAL LITERACY DAY
Sponsored by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization and the International Reading Association, this day focuses attention on worldwide literacy issues and needs. For more, go to www.reading.org.

SEPTEMBER 15–OCTOBER 15—NATIONAL HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH
This celebration honors the histories, cultures, and contributions of American citizens who trace their ancestry to Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean, and Central and South America. Go to www.infoplease.com and search on Hispanic Heritage Month for quizzes, games, and more.

SEPTEMBER 17–23—CONSTITUTION WEEK
By presidential proclamation, this annual event—which kicks off with Citizenship Day on the 17th—celebrates our Constitution and reaffirms our rights and obligations as citizens. To explore the Constitution, access multi-media archives, and more, visit www.constitutioncenter.org/. Go to www.learner.org for free professional development programming available from Annenberg/CPB.

OCTOBER

OCTOBER 4—FIRST DAY OF RAMADAN
This day marks the beginning of the ninth month of the Islamic calendar and is a holy time when Muslims fast and honor the revelation of the Koran to the prophet Muhammad.

OCTOBER 4–5—ROSH HASHANAH
Rosh Hashanah serves as the Jewish New Year and ushers in the High Holy Days, a time of fasting, reflection, and prayer. They conclude with Yom Kippur on October 10.

OCTOBER 10–14—NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH WEEK
A good school lunch is vital to student learning. It's no wonder, then, that this year's theme is School Lunch: It's Instrumental. Visit www.schoolnutrition.org/nslw/ for recipes, activities, and more.

OCTOBER 16—WORLD FOOD DAY
Established by the United Nations in 1979, World Food Day focuses awareness on the problems of hunger, malnutrition, and poverty. Visit www.worldfooddayusa.org for materials and lessons to help your students become involved in creating a world where everyone has enough to eat.

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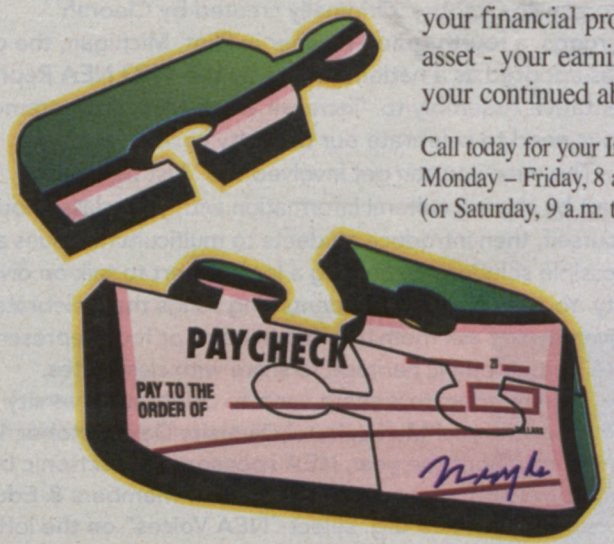

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State by state, we're bringing discount auto insurance to America's educators.

As a member of the NEA, you can qualify for the *NEA Members Auto & Home Insurance Program*, an outstanding plan with discount rates negotiated exclusively for you.

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In Print

A DAY IN THE LIFE

Author Karen English assumes the voices of six fictional third graders at a public school in ***Speak To Me (And I Will Listen Between the Lines).*** A range of personality types, including the daydreamer and the misfit, are represented in the raw and expressive free verse poems. While the language is simple and the subject matter may seem inconsequential (a pink-inked pen causes a big drama), English's well-worded pieces verify that children experience the same spectrum of emotions as adults. 32 pp. $16 from Farrar, Straus and Giroux. To order, go to www.fsgkidsbooks.com.

CONQUERING COLLEGE

Whether it's the SATs, ACTs, or just the Common Application, Joyce Slayton Mitchell gives good suggestions to applicants and their parents on how to make it into the college of their dreams in ***Winning the Heart of the College Admissions Dean***. Mitchell's advice on how to research schools and what not to say during interviews is confirmed with excerpts from college admissions directors at schools such as Harvard and Stanford. 170 pp. $14.95 from Ten Speed Press. To order, visit www.tenspeedpress.com.

STOPPING BULLIES

Education and family psychologist Kenneth Shore takes a new approach in bullying prevention with his book ***The ABC's of Bullying Prevention: A Comprehensive Schoolwide Approach***. Instead of focusing on the sometimes devastating effects of bullying, such as depression and school shootings, Shore establishes a clear definition of the word bullying and steps to prevent it. He calls on school administrators, teachers, and parents to focus efforts into controlling and eliminating this growing problem. 79 pp. $14 from National Professional Resources, Inc. To order, call 800-453-7461.

HAVING OUR SAY

In ***Red Hot Salsa: Bilingual Poems on Being Young and Latino in the United States***, renowned Latino poets and literary figures in the United States share their hopes, dreams, and identities. Edited by Lori Marie Carlson, this compilation of moving, vibrant poems expresses the complexity, ethnic variation, linguistic diversity, and the yearning spirit of the Latino community. Written in both Spanish and English, the poems touch on universal themes such as language, neighborhoods, love, family, and victory. 140 pp. $14.95 from Henry Holt and Company. To order, go to www.henryholt.com.

THE POWER OF PORTFOLIOS

Student-Led Conferencing Using Showcase Portfolios, by Barbara Benson and Susan Barnett, reveals how to motivate students to excel and achieve higher standards of learning while increasing parent involvement in the process. With easy-to-use timelines, sample schedules, and guidelines on collecting work samples, this comprehensive text helps transform oft-dreaded parent conferences into productive discussions for all. 192 pp. $29.95 from Corwin Press. To order, go to www.corwingpress.com.

Heads Up from NEA Member Benefits

REAP THE BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP by taking full advantage of all the money-saving programs and services available through NEA Member Benefits. Choose from high-quality insurance, credit, loan, deposit, investment, and discount products designed exclusively for NEA members and their families.

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Call the toll-free number, 1-800-637-4636, or visit www.neamb.com today!

RE-TOOL YOUR RETIREMENT PLANNING with the latest in investment and retirement planning services from Morningstar! Offered by the NEA Valuebuilder® Program, NEA members and their families can now take advantage of:

Learning Station—online education, including general investing and financial articles and interactive tools, for novice and sophisticated investors alike

Guidance Online—investment guidance, providing members with a retirement goal savings target and asset class suggestions for their portfolio to help them meet their goals

Target Portfolios—which allow members to choose among a range of pre-determined portfolios based on an assessment of investor type and time horizon

Managed Accounts—which offer professionally designed portfolios that are personalized based on the member's individual financial situation, risk tolerance, and investment options

Find out more by calling toll free, 1-800-NEA-VALU.

NO NEA MEMBER DUES DOLLARS ARE EVER USED TO DEVELOP OR PROMOTE NEA MEMBER BENEFITS PROGRAMS.

PHOTO: PHOTODISC

Announcing

THE NEW NEA REWARDS AMERICAN EXPRESS® CARD

The no annual fee Rewards Card exclusively for NEA Members and their families[Δ]

Now more than ever, NEA membership has its rewards. The first ever NEA Rewards American Express Card, brought to you by NEA Member Benefits, offers the features and buying power of a Rewards Card, but with no annual fee, a choice of rewards, and the option to pay over time.[†]

With the NEA Rewards Card you are enrolled in the *WorldPoints*® program where you can easily earn points for your choice of travel, cash, and merchandise rewards – you get one point for every purchase dollar you spend,[♦] plus double points for travel and dining until January 2006.[♦♦]

The many valuable features of the NEA Rewards Card include a 0% Introductory Annual Percentage Rate (APR) on balance transfers and cash advance checks,[†] complimentary Emergency Roadside Assistance,[*] plus Identity Theft Protection[*] and great shopping benefits too.

Call today to apply and get 2,500 bonus points after your first use of your new Card – **1-888-758-7946** and mention priority code **CIH2**. (TTY users call 1-800-833-6262.)

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AMERICAN EXPRESS

[†]The Annual Percentage Rate (APR) for purchases, cash advance checks, balance transfers, and Bank and ATM cash advance transactions made with the NEA Rewards American Express Card is currently 11.24%. This rate may vary. The current introductory APR offer for cash advance check and balance transfer transactions is 0% through your first six statement closing dates, effective upon the opening of your account. If your minimum monthly payment is late, or when the introductory APR expires, the non-introductory APR for your account is calculated using the Variable-Rate Information accompanying your Card. If your payment is late, the Indexed Rate is applied to new and outstanding cash advance check and balance transfer balances as of the first day of the billing cycle in which the payment was late or not received. Transaction fee for Bank and ATM cash advances; credit card cash advance checks and balance transfers is 2% of each cash advance ($2 minimum, $30 maximum). Transaction fee for the purchase of wire transfers, person-to-person money transfers, bets, lottery tickets, and casino gaming chips is 2% of each such purchase ($2 minimum, $30 maximum). Transaction fees are waived on balance transfers requested with your application. MBNA allocates your payments to balances (including new transactions) with lower APRs before balances with higher APRs. Balance transfers and/or cash advances of any kind may not be used to pay off or pay down any other MBNA account. If your available credit cannot accommodate any transaction, fee and/or finance charge, the account will be subject to over-the-credit-limit costs. REMINDER: To obtain the benefits of the grace period for new purchases, you must pay your New Balance Total in full and on time. The 0% APR does not apply to purchases, or to Bank or ATM cash advances.

American Express (1) converts charges made in foreign currencies to U.S. dollars using a rate selected on the business day prior to the day on which the charges are processed by American Express and (2) applies a 1% commission to the converted amount.

[Δ]This credit card program has been developed for NEA members and their families only. NEA family members eligible for Cardmembership include parents, spouse or domestic partner, and children. If a member decides not to renew membership, that person and his/her family will no longer be eligible to receive the preferred rates, fees and special promotions offered through the credit card program. If eligible, a replacement card will be offered. Any account opened in response to this offer will be governed by the laws of Delaware.

[♦]*WORLDPOINTS* REWARDS. Rewards begin at 2,500 points for cash/merchandise and 25,000 points for air. Air rewards subject to maximum dollar value and special air arrangements require payment of additional points and a processing fee. Earn 1 point per dollar of new net retail purchases charged to the Card each month. Cash advances, balance transfers, purchases of money orders or other cash equivalents, out-of-network payments made through Bill Pay Choice,[SM] purchases made by or for a business or for a business purpose, and unauthorized/fraudulent transactions do not earn points. Earn unlimited points. Points valid for 5 years. Air rewards from AK, HI, or PR limited to mainland U.S. unless fare paid to U.S. gateway. Points and/or rewards may not be combined with other discount or reward programs, unless specifically authorized by MBNA. Online merchandise catalog has widest selection of rewards; abridged catalog sent upon request. Cash reward check expires 90 days after date of issue. Cash rewards not transferable. Other significant terms apply. Program subject to change. View program details at mbnarewards.com. Details also accompany new account materials.

[♦♦]Two points per dollar offer applies to net retail purchase transactions (qualifying purchases less credits, returns, and adjustments) made with the Card through January 1, 2006, at any eligible retail merchant categories as designated by MBNA. Retail merchants have no connection with, or direct participation in this offer. Complete details, including eligible merchant category codes will accompany new account materials. In addition to basic Points earnings, 2,500 Bonus Points will be credited to your account within 90 days of making your first retail purchase. Limit one bonus offer per new account; offer not transferable.

[*]Limitations and exclusions apply to Card benefits. Benefits apply to Cardmembers and in some cases certain family members as outlined in Guide to Coverage. Details accompany new account materials. Emergency Roadside Assistance provided by AXA Assistance USA, Chicago, IL. Emergency Roadside Assistance available to you when you have made at least one (1) purchase with your Card in the prior 12 months. The Identity Theft Recovery Unit is provided by Intersections, Inc.

The NEA is not involved in the credit decision process; standard credit procedure is followed. All applications will be subject to a confidential standard review by MBNA America.

Absolutely NO membership dues are used to market this program.

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On TV

JACK'S BIG MUSIC SHOW

NOGN, Daily starting September 12, 12:30 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. ET, check local listings.

This live-action preschool series is hosted by Jack, a music-loving puppet and his melodious cast of friends who play every day at Jack's clubhouse. The half-hour shows feature videos and live, in-studio performances by popular children's musicians. Can be taped and used in the classroom for one year.

FOUNDATIONS OF AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

Discovery Channel, September 13, 5 a.m. ET/P.

This documentary investigates new findings from the night that helped bring America into the Revolutionary War. Watch Thomas Jefferson articulate the ideals of a new and free nation. Witness the struggles faced by the Constitution's framers. And peruse the first 10 amendments that were made to it. Can be taped and used in the classroom for one year.

AMERICAN MASTERS—ERNEST HEMINGWAY: RIVERS TO THE SEA

PBS, September 14, 9 p.m. ET, check local listings.

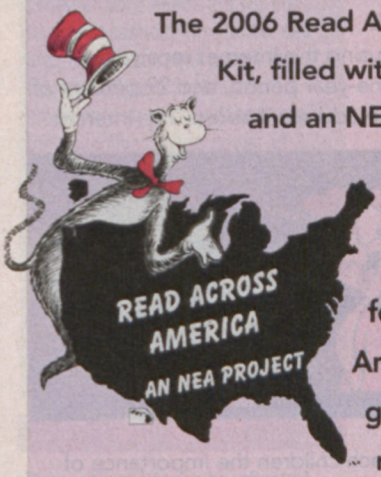
Hemingway wanted to create a picture of the world he knew, but a world that would be described by "boiling it down always" to its essential core, rather than spreading it out thin, as he put it. What he left out, readers must fill in, thus creating a kind of fiction new to the American scene. Like his books, Hemingway's life was filled with action, adventure, and danger, from driving an ambulance during World War I to reporting from the front during World War II. This hourlong documentary gives viewers a satisfying taste of his prose, with selections from some of his most famous novels and short stories. Within all the writing is an attempt to face fear, and even defeat, as a condition of existence in the 20th century. American Masters has a Web page dedicated to this show with film clips, timeline, resources, and more at http://pbs.org/wnet/americanmasters.

20TH CENTURY WITH MIKE WALLACE: HISPANICS IN AMERICA

History Channel, September 19, 6 a.m. ET/P.

An hourlong look at Hispanic contributions to American society and the rapid growth of this segment of the U.S. population. Can be taped and used in the classroom for two years.

Get Ready To Read!



The 2006 Read Across America Resource Kit, filled with posters, event ideas, and an NEA members-only CD-ROM, begins shipping this month. To request your copy and sign up for the Read Across America e-newsletter, go to www.nea.org/readacross.

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BIOGRAPHY—FIDEL CASTRO: EL COMANDANTE

A&E, September 20, 7 a.m. ET/P, check local listings.

Take in this Spanish-language profile of Cuba's controversial leader for the past four decades, one of the last great communist dictators. The hourlong program can be taped and used in the classroom for two years with teaching materials available at www.aetv.com/classroom.

AT THE WESTERN FRONTIER

Discovery Channel, September 21, 5 a.m. ET.

This documentary of the transcontinental railroad looks at how this new mode of transportation changed the make-up of America's western lands, explores what happened to boomtowns after the gold and silver were mined, and considers the realities of frontier life and the myths about the Wild West. Can be taped and used in the classroom for one year.

TLC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL: SCIENTIFIC INQUIRY III

The Learning Channel, September 23, 6 a.m. ET/P.

Explore how plants convert a few key elements into all the food they need, how forces deep within Earth continue to change our planet, how the Sun's inevitable death will affect Earth and the other planets in our solar system, and how the effects of energy transfer and our planet's constant motion. This 30-minute episode is designed for grades K–6 and consists of segments edited from original documentaries. The show can be taped and used in the classroom for two years.

On TV listings are provided by KIDSNET, a national resource for children's media in Washington, D.C., www.kidsnet.org, and by Cable in the Classroom's Access Learning *magazine at www.ciconline.org.*

PHOTO TOP LEFT: BARBARA NITKE/NICKELODEON; BOTTOM: ERNEST HEMINGWAY PHOTOGRAPHY LIBRARY/JOHN F. KENNEDY LIBRARY, BOSTON, MA; RIGHT: ABC NEWS

On the Web

PROTECTING KIDS ONLINE

Studies show that 1 in 5 youth using the Internet receive an online sexual solicitation in a one-year period, and 29 percent of children will give out their home address if asked. The Internet Keep Safe Coalition group teaches rules of Internet safety to children and parents, reaching them online and in school. The iKeepSafe.org Web site uses an animated mascot named Faux Paw the Techno Cat to teach children the importance of protecting personal information and avoiding inappropriate places on the Internet. Children safely navigate the Web through a virtual playground, Faux Paw's adventures in storybooks, and educational games. Educational materials, including worksheets, are available for parents and educators. Go to www.ikeepsafe.org.

Welcome to...
iKeepSafe.org
The World's Most Powerful Internet Safety Portal for Kids
CLICK FOR A STATE MAP
CHOOSE YOUR STATE

ACCESSING DATA ON PUBLIC EDUCATION

SchoolMatters.com provides searchable information about public schools, school districts, and state education systems throughout the nation, including student achievement data, financial information, demographic breakdowns, tax base details, and more. The site is a free public service sponsored by the National Education Data Partnership, a collaboration among the Council of Chief State School Officers, Standard & Poor's School Evaluation Services, Achieve, Inc., and the CELT Corporation. The service includes powerful analytical tools and objective analyses that provide education leaders with the information they need to make better-informed decisions about schools and school systems. Go to www.schoolmatters.com.

FREEVIBE.COM DRUG FACTS

Designed for teens, this interactive, anti-drug site has downloadable drug information resources including articles, books, brochures, banners, postcards, and posters. It also provides information on drugs and addiction and tracks news stories about drugs of interest to teens. Go to www.freevibe.com/Drug_Facts/free-resources.asp.

BACK TO SCHOOL DRUG PREVENTION PROGRAM

NIDA Goes Back to School is a source of free information from the National Institute on Drug Abuse about the latest science-based drug abuse publications and teaching materials. Specific curricula and other teaching aids are available. Hard copies of the materials are free, but curriculum materials are reserved for teachers. Visit http://backtoschool.drugabuse.gov/.

BOOKS BY NEA MEMBERS

THE MYSTERY OF THE MISSING DOG

By Gwendolyn Hooks

When Alex loses his dog, Jet, he frantically checks every nook and cranny to uncover the mystery. Former math teacher Hooks was inspired to write this tale after a three-week search for her own pet, Kitty Kat Hooks. This Level 1 book from the "Just for You! Books" series includes helpful hints and suggestions on how parents can use the story to develop their children's reading and comprehension skills. Ages 5–6. 32 pp. $3.99 from Scholastic Inc. To order, call 1-800-SCHOLASTIC.

LAUGHING MATTERS: USING HUMOR IN CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

By Rick Shade and Patti Garret

Written by longtime educators, this book explores the art of humor and teaches others how to incorporate this art in their curriculum. The book is divided into several chapters that allow readers to diagnose what kind of humor they have and then decide how to best apply it to make learning fun. Complete with a glossary and a list of additional resources, this book helps keep students laughing. 92 pp. from Professional Associates Publishing. To order and for pricing, visit www.raspo.com.

MY MOUNTAIN SONG

By Shutta Crum

Author, poet, and children's librarian Shutta Crum pens this tale of Brenda Gail, who spends her summer in the Kentucky mountains exploring the beauty of nature while picking out memories to put in her special song. Gathering eggs, Big Ma's breakfasts, and a hen named Morning Glory are just a few ingredients for the mountain song in this book beautifully illustrated by Ted Rand. 32 pp. $16 from Houghton Mifflin Company. To order, visit www.houghtonmifflinbooks.com/.

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Let's Talk About Skin

Raising issues of race with young children

BY RITA TENORIO

Early one fall, I sat down with seven children in my first-grade class. We talked about how we were alike and how we were different. "Our skin is different," one child said. I asked them to put their hands on the table, so we could see all the colors.

But LaRhonda, who is African American, scowled and slid her hands under the table.

It was a reaction I had seen before. I teach at La Escuela Fratney in a racially mixed, working-class Milwaukee neighborhood. My students include Black kids, Whites, and Latinos. And, unfortunately, many of these six- and seven-year-olds believe it is better to be light-skinned than dark. Already, the legacy of racism in our country has made an impact.

I have seen fair-skinned children move if Black children sit down next to them. English speakers won't play with Latino children. On the playground, a group of White girls won't let their darker-skinned peers join in their games, explaining: "Brown kids can't be in our club."

Some people would say my students can't deal with issues of race because they are too young. But my experience says they can. During the past several years, those of us teaching first grade at Fratney have developed activities to help us discuss race and social justice in an age-appropriate way.

"SOME PEOPLE would say my students can't deal with issues of race because they are too young. But my experience says they can."

We ask our students to collect and share information about their families and ancestry: How they got their names, how their families came to Milwaukee, which holidays they celebrate and how. At every step, we help them explore the nature of racial and cultural differences, and to overcome simplistic notions of who's "better" or who is "like us" and who isn't.

We discuss our skin colors. Usually at first, some children—especially those with very dark skin like LaRhonda—are reluctant to describe their color.

We ask students if they have ever heard anyone say something bad or mean about another person's color. Hands shoot up.

"My mom says you can't trust Black people."

"My sister won't talk to the Puerto Rican kids on the bus."

"Mara said I couldn't play, that I was too Black to be her friend."

We talk about ways we've heard others use people's skin color to make fun of them and what to do in those situations. And we ask: Do people choose their color? Where do you get your skin color? Is it better to be one color than another?

In the story *The Colors of Us* by Karen Katz, Lena learns that "brown" is a whole range of colors. Like the characters in the story, we take red, yellow, black, and white paint and mix them until we've each found the color of our own skin.

In another exercise inspired by Sheila Hamanaka's *All the Colors of the Earth*, students look for something at home that matches their skin color. We display the pieces of wood and fabric, the cinnamon and coffee, the dolls and ceramic pieces that match us.

Gradually, students begin to see past society's labels. It is always amazing to children that friends who call themselves "black," for example, can actually have very light skin. Or that Puerto Rican children can be darker than some African Americans.

The children learn to challenge stereotypes and speak back to unfair comments. Annie wrote, "I like my skin color. It is like peachy cream." James wrote, "My color is the same as my dad's. I think the new baby will have this color too." And Keila wrote, "When I was born, my color was brown skin and white skin mixed together."

When LaRhonda wrote about mixing the colors to match her skin, she said: "We put black, white, red, and yellow [together]. I like the color of my skin."

How far she had come since the day she would not show us her hands.

Students' names have been changed. **Rita Tenorio** (rmmt@aol.com) is an editor of *Rethinking Schools*. A longer version of this article is at www.rethinkingschools.com/archive/18_03/club183.shtml.

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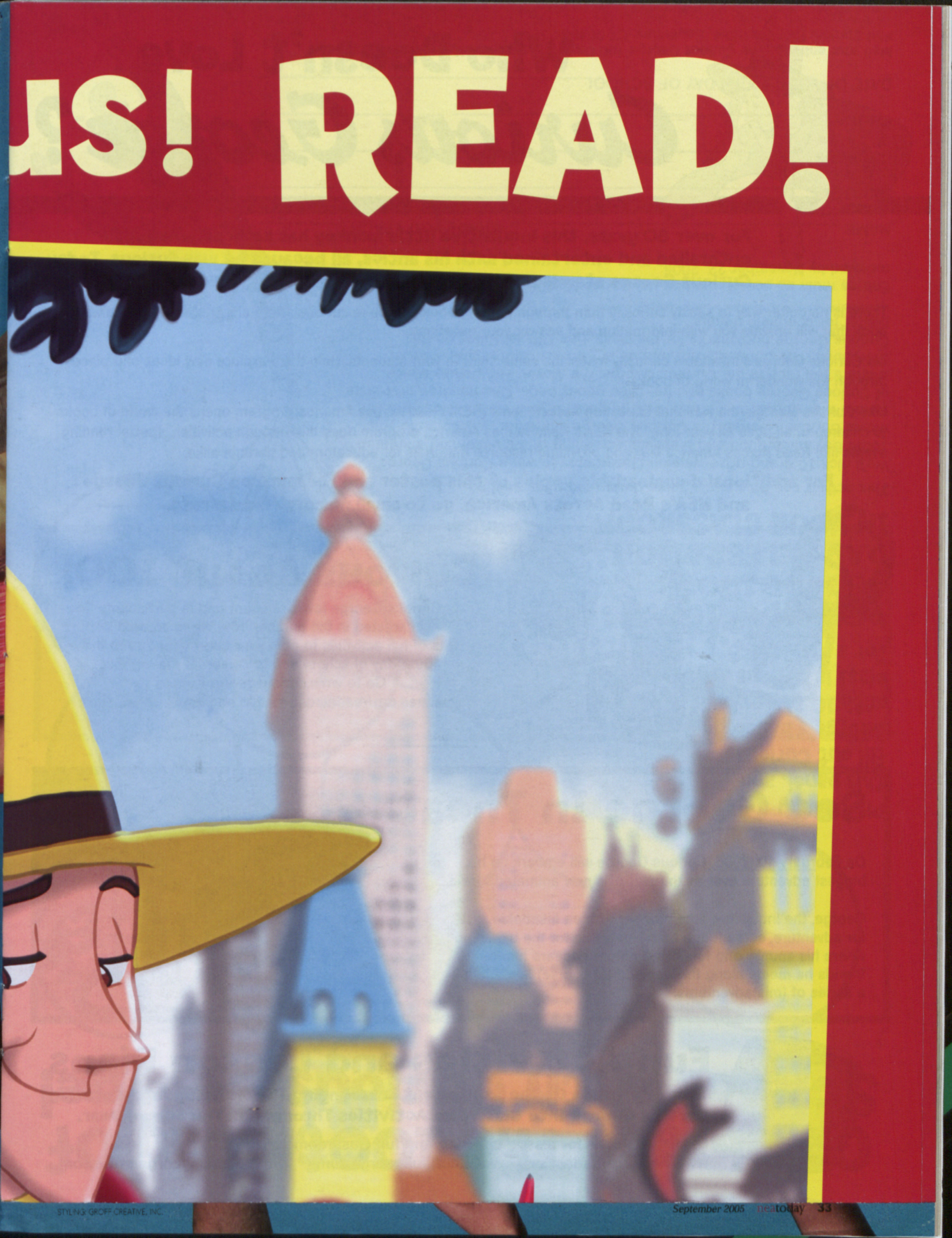
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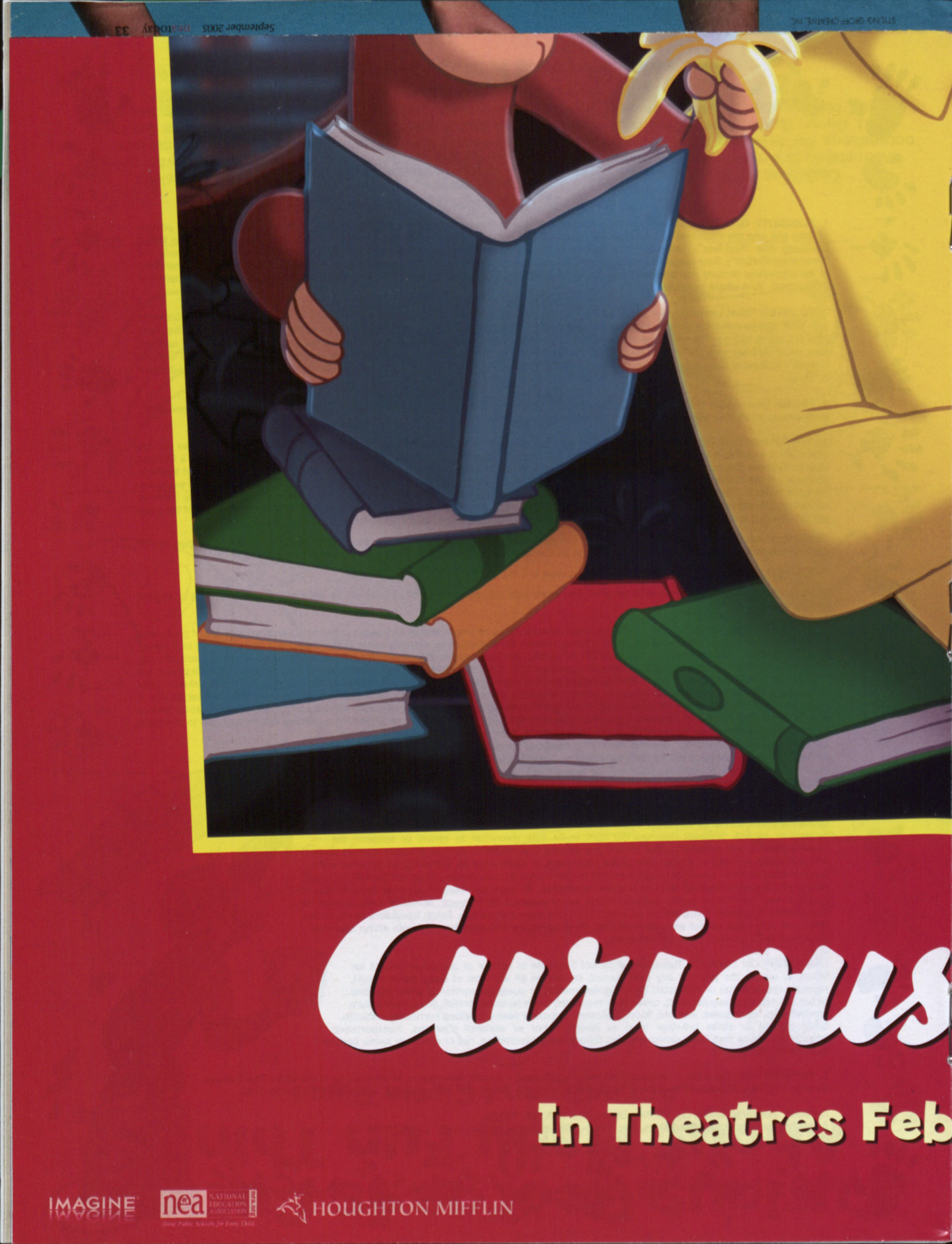
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